

91.94

THE
MISCELLANEOUS
WORKS

OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
EDWARD,

Earl of Clarendon,

Lord High Chancellor of *ENGLAND*,

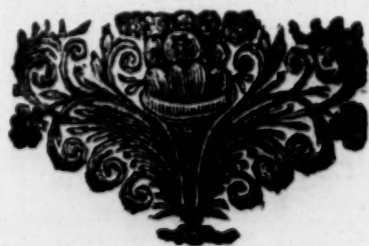
AUTHOR of the History of the REBELLION
and CIVIL-WARS in *England*.

B E I N G

*A COLLECTION of Several Valuable TRACTS, written
by that Eminent Statesman.*

Published from His LORDSHIP's Original MSS.

The SECOND EDITION.



L O N D O N:

Printed for SAMUEL PATERSON, at *Shakespear's-Head*, opposite *Durham-*
Yard, in the *Strand*.

M,DCC,LII

MISCELLANEOUS

W O R K S

RIGHTS RESERVED

E D W A R D S

Author of the

High Chancellor of the Exchequer

AUTHOR OF THE



BY THE

A Collection of the most valuable
manuscripts and printed books
belonging to His Majesty's Library



E D W A R D S

Printed for the Stationery Office, by the

MILNER

THE
EDITOR *to the* READER.

THE following T R A C T S of the Earl of CLARENDON were, by the Booksellers, procur'd from his Daughter the Lady FRANCES KEIGHTLEY, a little before her Death, which lately happen'd. They are all written in his own Hand, and were thought so well of by himself, that he has mention'd them in his Will, and there recommended them to the Care and Publication of some of his Acquaintance (whose Names may be seen in his Will) Men of great Learning and Quality, who probably forgot their Trust, or died before it could be executed. The Style is the same with that of his *History*, as will appear to every Reader; and he has here every where shewn the same honest and warm Concern for Truth and Liberty, the same Spirit of Piety, and the same Experience of Men. His *Vindication* contains many curious Facts hitherto utterly unknown; his *Moral Essays* are written in a Strain of great good Sense and Politeness; and his *Divine* manifest a Soul full of Holiness and heavenly Temper: In his *Prayers* particularly, there is such abounding Fire and Eloquence, such Fervour, Faith, and Zeal, that I have seen nothing equal to them in any of our Books of Devotion. The Whole is a Work worthy of the Name and Parts of the great Earl of CLARENDON; and the Papers from which 'tis printed, may be seen by any one who has Doubts or Curiosity, at the Publishers, in his Lordship's own Hand-Writing.

The

The CONTENTS.



<i>Discourse by Way of Vindication of my self from the Charge of High-Treason, with which I was charged by the House of Commons, November 1667.</i>	Page 1
<i>Reflections upon several Christian Duties, Divine and Moral, by Way of Essays, viz.</i>	
Of Human Nature,	89
Of Life,	90
<i>Reflections upon the Happiness which we may enjoy in and from our Selves,</i>	95
Of impudent Delight in Wickedness,	105
Of Drunkenness,	107
Of Envy,	112
Of Pride,	114
Of Anger,	119
Of Patience in Adversity,	120
Of Contempt of Death, and the best providing for it,	127
Of Friendship,	130
Of Counsel and Conversation,	137
Of Promises,	140
Of Liberty,	142
Of Industry,	145
Of Sickness,	146
Of Patience,	147
Of Repentance,	148
Of Conscience,	162
<i>On an active and on a contemplative Life, and when and why the one ought to be preferr'd to the other,</i>	167
Of War,	205
Of Peace,	209
Of Sacrilege,	211
Of the Reverence due to Antiquity,	218
<i>Against the multiplying Controversies, by insisting upon Particulars that are not necessary to the Point in Debate,</i>	240
<i>A Dialogue between an old Courtier, an old Lawyer, an old Soldier, an old Country Gentleman, and an old Alderman, of the Want of Respect due to Age,</i>	285
<i>A Dialogue between the same Persons and a Bishop concerning Education,</i>	313
<i>Contemplations and Reflections upon the Psalms of David, applying those Devotions to the Troubles of the Times,</i>	349

Several



Several TRACTS

Of the RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDWARD Earl of CLARENDON.

*A DISCOURSE, by Way of VINDICATION of
my self from the Charge of HIGH-TREASON,
with which I was charged by the HOUSE of
COMMONS, November, 1667.*

MONTPELLIER, July 24. 1668.



Nothing could be more surprizing to me, nor I think to any Man else, than to find my self, after near Thirty Years Service of the Crown in the highest Trust; after having passed all the Time of his Majesty's Exile with him beyond the Seas, and in his Service, and in which the indefatigable Pains I took was notorious to many Nations; and after I had the Honour and Happiness to return again with his Majesty into *England*, and to receive from him so many eminent Marks of his Favour, and to serve him near Eight Years after his Return in the Place of the greatest Trust, without ever having discovered that his Majesty was offended with me, or in Truth that he had ever the least ill Success from any Counsel I had ever given him; or that any Persons of Honour and Reputation, or Interest in the Nation, had ever made the least Complaint against me, or had any Thought that the Miscarriages (for Miscarriages were enough spoken of) had proceeded from me, or any Advice of mine: I say, as after all this I could not but be exceedingly surprised, to find my self on a sudden, when I had not the least Imagination of it, bereft of the King's Favour; and fallen so far from his Kindness, even within three or four Days after his Majesty had vouchsafed to condole with me in my House for the Death of my Wife, that he resolved to take the Great Seal from me: So it was no small Comfort to me,

2 Lord CLARENDON'S *Vindication*, &c.

to see and know, that very few Men of Honour or Reputation approved or liked what was done; but that the same was contrived, pursued, and brought to pass by Men and Women of no Credit in the Nation; by Men, who had never served his Majesty or his blessed Father eminently or usefully, but most of them of Trust and Credit under *Cromwell*, or never of Credit to do him the least Service; and who were only angry with me, for not being pleased with their vicious and debauched Lives, or for opposing or dissuading their loose and unreasonable Counsels, which they were every Day audaciously administering in Matters of the highest Moment, with great Licence and Presumption. But, above all, it was of the highest Consolation to me, when it was publickly and industriously declared, that the King was firmly resolved to destroy me, and would take it very well from all Men who would contribute thereunto, by bringing in any Charge or Accusation against me; when the most notorious Enemies I had, were the only Persons trusted in Employment; Men who had most eminently diserved and maliciously traduced the King, and been to that Time looked upon as such by his Majesty; and all who were believed to have Kindness for me were discountenanced; when Men of all Conditions and Degrees were daily solicited and importuned, by Promises and Threats, to declare themselves against me, at least if they would not be wrought over to do any thing against their Consciences, that they absent themselves from those Debates; that all this Malice and Conspiracy, with so long Deliberation and Consultation, should not be able at best to produce and exhibit any other Charge and Accusation against me, but such a one, as most Men who knew me, or had any Trust and Employment in the Publick Affairs, were well able to vindicate me from the Guilt of, and even my Enemies themselves did not believe: The Particulars whereof (as far as I can take Notice of them, they having not to this Day been reduced into any Form so much as in the *House of Commons* itself) I shall now examine; and if I shall appear too tedious in the Examination and Disquisition of them, and to say more than is necessary for my own Defence, and to mention many particular Persons in another manner than is usual upon Occasions of this Kind; I desire it may be remembered and considered, that this is not written as a formal Answer to an Impeachment, nor like to be published in my Life-time; a Judgment of Banishment being passed against me (without the least Proof made, or offered, for the making good any one Article of Treason or Misdemeanour) by Act of Parliament; but is a Debt due to my Children, and Posterity, that they may know (how much so ever they are or may be involved in the Effects of the sharp Malice against me) how far I am from any Guilt of those odious Crimes which have been so odiously laid to my Charge. And this being my End, I may be excused if I so far enlarge upon all Particulars, that it may be manifest unto them how far I have been from treading in those Paths, or having been accessory to those Counsels, which have been the Source from which any of those bitter Waters have flowed, which have corrupted the Taste even almost of the whole Nation. And in order to this so necessary Discourse and Vindication of my Integrity and Honour, I can only take Notice of the printed Paper of my Charge, all other Correspondence and Communication being so strictly inhibited to all kind of Men to hold any Commerce with me, except my Children and menial Servants, who only have Liberty to write to me of my own Domestick Affairs, and the Letters they write and receive being to be first communicated to one of the Secretaries of State.

Mr.

Mr. SEYMOR'S *Speech to the House of Lords*.

MY LORDS,

“ THE Commons Assembled in Parliament, having received Infor-
 “ mation of divers treasonable Practices and Designs of a great
 “ Peer of this House (*Edward Earl of Clarendon*) commanded me to
 “ accuse the said *Edward Earl of Clarendon* of Treason, and other Crimes
 “ and Misdemeanors; and I do here in their Names, and in the Names of
 “ the Commons of *England*, accuse *Edward Earl of Clarendon* of Trea-
 “ son, and other High Crimes and Misdemeanors. I am further com-
 “ manded by the House of Commons, to desire your Lordships, That the
 “ Earl of *Clarendon* may forthwith be Sequestred from Parliament, and
 “ be committed to safe Custody. They further command me to ac-
 “ quaint your Lordships, That they will in convenient Time Exhibit the
 “ Articles of the Charge against him.

November 14. 1667. The Vote of the House of Lords.

Resolved, &c.

“ That the Lords have not complied with the Desire of the House of
 “ Commons, concerning the Commitment of the Earl of Clarendon, and
 “ Sequestering him from Parliament; because the House of Commons have
 “ only accused him of Treason in general, and have not assigned or spe-
 “ cified any particular Treason.

ARTICLES of Treason exhibited in Parliament
 against EDWARD Earl of CLARENDON.

I. “ THAT the Earl of *Clarendon* hath designed a Standing Army
 “ to be raised, and to govern the Kingdom thereby; advising
 “ the King to Dissolve the present Parliament; to lay aside all Thoughts
 “ of Parliament for the future; to govern by Military Power, and to
 “ maintain the same by Free Quarter and Contribution.

II. “ That he hath, in hearing of many of his Majesty's Subjects, falsely
 “ and seditiously said, The King was in his Heart a Papist, Popishly-af-
 “ fected; or Words to that Effect.

III. “ That he hath received great Sums of Money for passing the *Ca-*
 “ nary Patent, and other illegal Patents; and granted several Injunctions
 “ to stop Proceedings at Law against them, and other illegal Patents for-
 “ merly granted.

IV. “ That he hath advised and procured divers of his Majesty's Sub-
 “ jects to be Imprisoned against Law, in remote Islands, Garrisons, and
 “ other Places, thereby to prevent them from the Benefit of the Law;
 “ and to introduce Precedents for Imprisoning of other of his Majesty's
 “ Subjects in like manner.

V. “ That he hath corruptly sold several Offices, contrary to Law.

VI. “ That he hath procured his Majesty's Customs to be Farmed at
 “ under Rates, knowing the same; and great pretended Debts to be paid
 “ by his Majesty, to the Payment whereof his Majesty was not in Strict-

ness

4 Lord CLARENDON'S Vindication, &c.

“ nefs bound: And hath received great Sums of Money for procuring the
“ fame.

VII. “ That he hath received great Sums of Money from the Company
“ of *Vintners*, or some of them, or their Agents, for exhausting the Prices
“ of Wine, and for freeing them from the Payment of legal Penalties
“ which they had incurred.

VIII. “ That he hath in short Time gained to himself a far greater Estate
“ than can be imagined to be lawfully gained in so short a Time: And
“ contrary to his Oath, hath procured several Grants under the Great Seal
“ from his Majesty, to himself and Relations, of several of his Majesty's
“ Lands, Hereditaments, and Leases, to the Dis-profit of his Majesty.

IX. “ That he introduced an Arbitrary Government in his Majesty's fo-
“ reign Plantations; and hath caused such as complained thereof, before
“ his Majesty and Council, to be long imprisoned for so doing.

X. “ That he did reject and frustrate a Proposal and Undertaking, ap-
“ proved by his Majesty, for the Preservation of *Nevis* and *St. Christo-*
“ *phers*, and reducing the *French* Plantations to his Majesty's Obedience;
“ after the Commissions were drawn for that purpose; which was the Oc-
“ casion of such great Losses and Damages in those Parts.

XI. “ That he advised and effected the Sale of *Dunkirk* to the *French*
“ King, being Part of his Majesty's Dominions, together with the Am-
“ munition, Artillery, and all sorts of Stores there, and for no greater
“ Value than the said Ammunition, Artillery, and Stores were worth.

XII. “ That the said Earl did unduly cause his Majesty's Letters Pa-
“ tents under the Great Seal of *England* (to one *Dr. Cronther*) to be al-
“ tered, and the Inrolement thereof to be unduly razed.

XIII. “ That he hath in an arbitrary way examined and drawn into
“ question divers of his Majesty's Subjects concerning their Lands, Tene-
“ ments, Goods and Chattels, and Properties; determined thereof at the
“ Council-Table, and stopped Proceedings at Law; and threatned some
“ that pleaded the Statute of 17 *Car. 1.*

XIV. “ That he had caused *Quo Warranto's* to be issued out against most
“ of the Corporations of *England* by Act of Parliament, to the Intent he
“ might receive great Sums of Money from them for Renewing their
“ Charters; which when they complied withal, he caused the said *Quo*
“ *Warranto's* to be discharged, and Prosecution thereon to cease.

XV. “ That he procured the Bills of Settlement for *Ireland*, and re-
“ ceived great Sums of Money for the same in a most corrupt and un-
“ lawful manner.

XVI. “ That he hath deluded and betrayed his Majesty and the Na-
“ tion, in all foreign Treaties and Negotiations relating to the late War.

XVII. “ That he was a principal Author of that fatal Counsel of Divi-
“ ding the Fleet, about *June 1666.*

THE first Charge then that is printed against me is, *That the Earl of Clarendon hath designed a Standing Army to be raised, and to govern the Kingdom thereby; advised the King to dissolve the present Parliament; to lay aside all Thoughts of Parliaments for the future; to govern by Military Power, and to maintain the same by free Quarter and Contribution.*

It is no great Vanity to believe, that there is not one Person in *England* of any Quality, to whom I am in any degree known, who believes me guilty of this Charge; and I want not a Cloud of Witnesses, (besides the Testimony that I hope his Majesty himself will vouchsafe to give me in
this

Lord CLARENDON's Vindication, &c. 5

this Particular) who from all they have heard me say in Council, and in Conversation, can vindicate me from this odious Opinion. Having had the Honour, by the special Command of his late Majesty of blessed Memory, to attend the Prince, his now Majesty, into the Parts beyond the Seas, and to be always with him and in his Service these many Years of his Exile, and till his happy Return; I always endeavoured to imprint in his Majesty's Mind an Affection, Esteem and Reverence for the Laws of the Land: without the trampling of which under Foot himself could not have been oppress'd; and by the Vindication and Support of them, he could only hope and expect Honour and Security to the Crown. Upon this Foundation and declared Judgment I came into the Service of his Father, by opposing all illegal and irregular Proceedings in Parliament; and I never swerved from that Rule in my Advice and Counsel to him or his Son. From the Time of his Majesty's happy Return from beyond the Seas, I took nothing so much to Heart as the Establishment of the due Administration of Justice throughout the Kingdom according to the known Laws of the Land, as the best Expedient I could think of for the composing the general Distempers of the Nation, and uniting the Hearts of the People in a true Obedience to, and Reverence for his Majesty's Person and Government. And with what Success I served his Majesty in this Province, (which he was pleased principally to commit to my Care and Trust) I must appeal to the whole Nation; and whether the oldest Man can remember, that in the best Times Justice was ever more equally administered, and with less Complaint and Murmur; which hath been frequently acknowledged from all the Parts of the Kingdom, and been often taken Notice of by the King himself with great Approbation, and confess'd by most of the Nobility upon several Occasions. I have often declared in Parliament the King's Affection and Reverence for the Laws, and his Resolution neither to swerve from them himself, nor to suffer any body else to do so: And upon the publick Occasions of swearing the Judges in any Courts, I always enjoined them to be very strict and precise in the Administration of Justice according to Law, with all Equality, and without respect of Persons, which the King expected from them; and that as he resolved never to interpose by Message or Letter for the Advancement or Favour of any Man's Right or Title, so he would take it very ill if any Subject (how Great soever) should be able to pervert them: And I do believe there have never passed so many Years together in any Age, in which the Crown hath not in the least degree interposed in any Cause or Title depending in *Westminster-Hall*, to incline the Court to this or that Side; or in which the Crown itself hath had so many Causes judged against it in several Courts; at least in which former Practice and Usage on the behalf of the Crown hath been less followed: And nothing is more known, than that from the Time of the King's blessed Return into *England*, even to the Preparation of this Charge against me, I was reproached with nothing so much as too much adhering to the Law, and subjecting all Persons to it; and this Reproach hath not been cast upon me by any so bitterly and maliciously, and in Places where they thought it might produce most Prejudice to me, as by those who now contrived this Charge, and who have always been great Enemies to the Law.

All this, and much more of this kind, is manifest to all the World; and therefore I need not labour more in this Vindication. Yet I cannot but observe, that there is not in all the King's Forces, nor was not when his Forces were then much greater, one Officer recommended by me; and

6 *Lord CLARENDON's Vindication, &c.*

most of them such who profess'd publicly a great Animosity against me; having been, by the Malice of some Men, very unreasonably perswaded that I was their Enemy; that I desired that they might be disbanded; at least so obliged to the Rules of Law, that they should be every Day cast into Prison; and they had indeed found that in some Insolencies they had committed against the Law, and some Pretences they had made to Privileges against Arrests and the like, that I had always opposed their Desires. So that it is not probable that I should contribute my Advice for the raising a Standing Army, and that the Kingdom should be governed thereby, when there were very few Men so like to be destroyed by that Army as my self.

There is another Part of this Article, how improbable and impossible soever, which in many respects will require a more ample Discourse and Defence: That I advised the King to dissolve the present Parliament; to lay aside all Thoughts of Parliaments for the future; to govern by Military Power, and to maintain the same by free Quarter and Contribution. Which Particulars, so compounded and put together, and solemnly undertaken to be proved, even by two Privy-Counsellors, who pretended to be present at the Debate, was in Truth the Foundation of the great Prejudice that was raised against me; and which, tho' known to be false to the Persons who dispersed it, and appeared very impossible to all Men who had but an indifferent good Opinion of my Integrity or Discretion; yet the Manner of the Insinuation, and the Circumstances with which it was related, and the private Intimation from some Privy-Counsellors that they would prove it, got so much Credit in the *House of Commons*, that they thought fit to make it a Part of my Charge; and therefore it will be necessary to set out a clear Narrative of that whole Debate, upon some Particulars whereof those Informers, against their Oath, and against all kind of Ingenuity, have grounded their Insinuation, and direct (though hitherto secret) Information: All the Particulars whereof are so well known to several Persons of Honour who were present, that I could never have doubted, if the Matter had ever been brought to a publick Examination, I should have received an ample Vindication; and, in Truth, that the Informers themselves, how confidently soever they had undertaken it, would never have justified their Accusation.

At the last Recess of the Parliament it had been prorogued to the 10th of *October* following, I being at that Time indisposed with the Gout, and so not able to be present. About the Beginning of *June* (the Treaty being then begun at *Breda*) the *Dutch Fleet* under the Command of *De Rutter* came upon our Coast, and seemed to be bound for the River of *Thames*, which caused a general Terror in *Kent*; upon which Lieutenant-General *Middleton* was suddenly sent down thither to draw the Train-bands together, in order to which he convened them to *Rocheſter*: The Fortifications at *Sheerness* (which the King believed to have been made defensible, having himself made a Journey thither in the Winter, and charged the Commissioners for the Ordnance for the Prosecution of it, who no doubt failed much in the Execution of his Commands) were found so weak, and so utterly untenable, that upon the Approach of the *Dutch Fleet*, the Soldiers who were in it (who were very good experienced Men, and under excellent Officers) were by their Cannon forced to quit it, and the *Dutch* presently landed upon it, and seemed to have a Resolution of fortifying it: Upon the News whereof, and of the general Distraction in that Country, the Duke of *Albemarle* was sent down to *Chatham*, with such

such Troops of Horse and Foot as could speedily be drawn together of the Regiments of Guards, and such of the Train-bands of the Neighbour Countries as could be persuaded to march. Upon the General's Arrival at *Chatham*, he writ very chearful and confident Letters, that he had no Fear of the *Dutch* if they should make any Attempt, which he was confident they durst not do; and that he had put a Chain over the River, which would stop their Ships from coming up: However, the next Day, being the 12th of *June*, the *Dutch* Fleet advanced, having without the least Difficulty broken the Chain, and shortly after taken and burned Two or Three of the greatest Ships of the Royal Navy (which had been very negligently left there, and might well have been brought into Security) and Six or Seven Merchant Ships, whereof some were Outward-bound with Merchandize; all Things being in so great Distraction at *Chatham* and thereabouts, that nothing was done that was naturally to be expected from an experienced Commander, who had excellent Officers with him, ready to obey his Orders.

The Noise of this quickly filled the City of *London*; and yet the Confusion there was not so great as in the Court it self, where they who had most advanced the War, and reproached those who were against it, as Men who were not solicitous for the Honour of the Nation, and who never spoke of the *Dutch* but with Contempt, and that they should be cudgelled, were the most dejected Men that can be imagined, speaking very bitterly against those who had advanced the War: And truly the Distraction was so great in Court and City, as if an Army of a Hundred Thousand Men had encompassed it; and tho' the *Dutch* Fleet returned out of the *Thames* and advanced no farther than *Chatham*, yet it remained still upon the Coast, and landed about *Harwich*, and attempted the Castle of *Langborne Point*, and kept the Counties of *Essex*, *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* in perpetual Alarm for many Days: The Train-bands which had been drawn together, pretended that the Time was expired that they were obliged to maintain themselves; and therefore required Pay, or Liberty to depart, though the Enemy was in View, and themselves like to be made the first Prey. The Regiments which had been raised without Charge to the King, upon the Interest of several Persons of Honour and great Reputation, had upon the first Musters received one Month's Pay; but that Time was expired, and they must either receive another Pay, or take Free Quarter upon the Country, which the Time would not bear. In this Perplexity some Persons had advised the King to summon the Parliament to convene upon a short Day, notwithstanding it stood prorogued till *October*. And when his Majesty asked my Opinion of it, I told him I thought it could not be done; I was sure it never had been done. To which his Majesty replied, That he was assured by many that he might do it, and named Mr. *Prynne* to be of that Opinion. Shortly after his Majesty appointed the whole Council to meet upon the Debate, of which I knew nothing till I came into the Room: The King himself told us what we were to debate upon; that we all saw the Straits we were in, the general Distemper of the Nation, the Insolence of the Enemy; that there was a Necessity of having an Army; that he had no Money nor knew where to get any, nor could imagine any other Way to provide against the Inconveniencies which were in View, than by calling the Parliament; of which and any other Expedient he would receive our Advice; expressing so much of his own Sense, that it was plain enough that he inclined to that Remedy: Upon which Three or Four of those who sat at the lower End of the Table, and who were
known

known to have contrived the Counsel, expressed themselves at large; seemed very confident that it might lawfully be done; that no other Way could be found to raise Money; that Men could not be kept together without Money; and desired that they who were of another Opinion, would propose some other Counsel. I do not deny, their Reasons did in no Degree satisfy me; and though I knew very well that the Resolution was upon the Matter already taken, that there was a great Desire in some Men (whose Malice to me was enough known) to lead me into some Expressions of which they might take Advantage; yet the Obligation of my Oath to deliver my self freely, the conceived Security of that Place, and the Opinion that the Thing proposed was not reasonable, and would produce many Inconveniencies to the King's Service, prevailed with me to discharge my own Conscience, God knows according to the best of my Understanding: I said, I knew well the Disadvantage upon which I spoke in so tender a Point, and too impopular a Thing it was to be against the convening of the Parliament in a Time of so great Straits, when no other Remedy could be found; yet that appearing to me not practicable, I thought it ought not to be embraced: That it was confessed by all Hands, that in the Point of Law, the convening them before the Time to which they were adjourned, was at least very doubtful; and to me, upon all the Disquisition I could make, it was very clear that it could not be done; that the Temper of both Houses was well known; and it could not but be presumed, that when they came together, the first Debate they would fall upon, would be of the Manner of their coming, and whether they were in a Capacity to act; and I doubted very much, that there would be very few, who would be willing to pass an Act of Parliament in so doubtful a Season; and then if their Meeting was only to confer when they might say any thing, and conclude nothing, I thought it well worth the considering, whether in so general a Distemper, such an Assembly might not interrupt all other Consultation and Expedients, and yet propose none, and so encrease the Confusion: I said, if the Necessities were so urgent, that it was necessary to have a Parliament convened, and that they could not lawfully re-assemble that which was prorogued till the Day to which it was prorogued, as I was confident it could not be, there could be no doubt but that it was in the King's Power to dissolve that Parliament, and forthwith issue out Writs for the calling another Parliament, which might regularly be assembled more than a Month before the prorogued Parliament could meet. And there were many more of the Council of the same Mind, that it would be best to dissolve the Parliament, and to call another. Many declared themselves against this Expedient; professing, that tho' there had at some Times appeared many ill Humours and Misapprehensions in the *House of Commons*; yet that they were very right, in the main, for the King's Service; and that there is no Hope ever to see another House so well constituted for Church and State; and the King himself seemed to have the same Opinion, and no Inclination to dissolve it; and so resumed the former Debate, what was to be done for the present to raise Money, or to maintain his Army, if he should not call the Parliament to meet before the Day. The old Argument, that there could no other Way be found out, was urged; and calling with more than usual Earnestness in that Place, that they who were of another Opinion would propose their Expedient, the King himself with some Quickness, ask'd me what I would advise? To which I replied, that if in Truth that which was proposed was in the Nature of it not practicable, and being practised could not attain the Effect, it ought to be

be laid aside, tho' another could not for the present be proposed; that I thought it clear, that the Parliament could not be assembled in less than twenty Days; and that if they were met, and believed themselves lawfully qualified to grant a Supply of Money, we all know the Formality of that Transaction would require so much Time, that Money could not be raised soon enough thereby to raise an Army, or maintain that Part of it which was raised to prevent the landing of an Enemy which was already upon the Coast, and (as many thought) ready every Day to make their Descent; and yet the sending out a Proclamation for re-assembling the Parliament, would inevitably put an End to all other Councils; that, for my part, I believed the *Dutch* had satisfied themselves with the Affront they had given us, and had no Thought of proceeding farther; that they could not have Men enough on board to make any Descent, without our having Notice of it; and that the King had all possible Security from the King of *France*, that he had no such Intention, and then it would not be in the Power of the *Dutch*, with their own Strength, to give us any Trouble: However, for the present Support of those Troops which were to guard the Coasts, since Money could not be found for their present constant Pay, without which Free Quarter could not be avoided, the only Way that appeared to be practicable, and to avoid the last Evil, would be to write Letters to the Lieutenants and Deputy-Lieutenants of those Counties where the Troops were obliged to remain, that they would cause Provisions of all kinds to be brought into their Quarters, that so the Soldiers might not be compelled to straggle to provide for their own Victuals, which would end in the worst kind of Free Quarter; and that the like Letters might be written to the Neighbour-Counties, wherein no Soldiers were quartered, to raise Money by way of Contribution, as had heretofore been done, that so the Troops might be enabled to stay, and continue in the Posture they were in, for Defence of the Kingdom, in which those other Counties had their Share of the Benefit, and without which they must themselves be exposed to the Disorder of our own Soldiers, or to the Invasion of the Enemy upon their Retreat, or to both: And it is possible, that in the Earnestness of this Debate, and the frequent Interruptions which were given, I might use that Expression of raising Contribution, as had been done in the late Civil War; but how, from such a Debate, in such a Place, and with such Circumstances, every Particular whereof will be justified by many Lords of the Council, who were then present, can naturally be formed any Conclusion, or in Truth any reasonable Imagination, that I have designed a standing Army to govern the Kingdom by, advised the King to dissolve the present Parliament, to lay aside all Thoughts of Parliaments for the future, to govern by Military Power, and to maintain the same by Free Quarter and Contribution, I must and am very willing to refer and submit to the impartial Judgment of the Parliament, and of all discerning Men.

THE second Article is, *That I have, in the hearing of many of his Majesty's Subjects, falsely and seditiously said, The King was in his Heart a Papist, Popishly-affected, or Words to that Effect.*

I have Occasion too often, throughout this whole Charge, to acknowledge and magnify the great Goodness of God Almighty, that since he thought not fit (for my greater Humiliation, and it may be to correct the Pride of a good Conscience) to preserve me entirely from those Aspersions of Infamy, and those *Flagella Linguae*, those Strokes of the Tongue,
D which

which always leave some Mark or Scar in the Reputation they desire to wound, that he hath yet infused into the Hearts of my Enemies, who suggested and contrived this Prosecution against me, to lay such Crimes to my Charge, as my Nature is known most to abhor, and which cannot only not be believed, but must be contradicted, and a Vindication of me from that Guilt must be made, by all Men who know me to any degree, or have been much in my Company; and as Justice would have required it, so the usual Forms in Cases of this Kind doth exact, that in so general a Charge, they should have named one single Person of those many, in whose Hearing I have laid that odious Imputation upon the King; and every Man will presume, that one such Person would have been named, if he could have been found. There is no Man now alive, who hath had the Honour to be so many Years about or near the Person of the King, as I have been; no Man who knows more the Temptations he hath undergone, and the Assaults he hath sustained, in the Matter of his Religion, during the whole Time of his Exile, when almost a total Despair possessed the Spirits of most Men of his own Religion, that he would ever recover his Regality; and the Hopes, and Promises, and Assurances, were so pregnant, of very many of all Conditions, that he should suddenly recover if he would change it: No Man knows so well, with what Christian Courage he repelled those Assaults, or with what pious Contempt and Indignation he resisted and rejected those Temptations; nor hath any Man (I think) held more Discourses with his Majesty concerning Religion, and sooner and more clearly discerned the Reproaches he would undergo, from that innate Candour in his Princely Nature, which disposed him to receive any Addresses, or hear any Discourses, which those of several Factions in Religion, with great Presumption, have used to present to him; whilst his Majesty hath, with equal Temper and singular Benignity, heard all; and pitying their Errors, dismissed them with Evidence, that their Arguments were too weak to make Impression in his Judgment; which though they knew well, yet either partly out of the Vanity of their Hearts, used all the Endeavours they could to get it believed that the King was propitious to them and their Party; and the *Papists*, being most presumptuous in particular, and in their dark Walks in the several Counties making it a special Argument to their Profelytes, and those they endeavoured to make so, that the King favoured them, and was of their Religion in his Heart; of which, and the great Prejudice it brought to his Majesty, I frequently received Advertisements from many Persons of Honour, and of warm Affections to the Government; of which I always inform'd the King, who was exceedingly offended at their Folly and Presumption, and wished that some of them might be apprehended, and prosecuted with the utmost Rigour, and that some such Prosecution might be made against all the *Roman* Catholicks, that they might all be convicted; which I always gave in Charge to the Judges accordingly; and upon that and the like Occasions, had a just and necessary Opportunity, to enlarge in the Presence of many Persons of Honour and Interest in the Kingdom upon the Sincerity of the King's Religion, and his constant Exercise of it when he suffered by it; giving such Instances of many Particulars, as were pertinent to the Discourse. Of which Endeavours of mine, and of some Fruit thereof, I doubt not but that many of as considerable Persons as are in *England* will be ready to give me their Testimony: And I may without Vanity say, that I had more than a common Part in the framing and promoting that Act of Parliament, that hath made those seditious Discourses, of the King's
being

Lord CLARENDON'S *Vindication*, &c. II

being a Papist in his Heart, or popishly-affected, so very penal as it is; and therefore, there is need of an undoubted and uncontrollable Evidence, that I did so soon run into that Crime my self; which is all I shall for the present say upon the second Article.

THE third Article is, *That I have received great Sums of Money for passing the Canary Patent, and other illegal Patents; and granted several Injunctions to stop Proceedings at Law against them, and other illegal Patents formerly granted.*

I did presume in my humble Address to the House of Peers to assure their Lordships, that I never received one Penny over and above the just Perquisites of my Office, according to the Precedent and Practice of the best Times, which I conceived to be those of my Lord *Coventry* and my Lord *Elmesmore*, and which I had made my Rule in all that I had received, except only what I had from the immediate Bounty of the King. And as I did always all that was in my Power to prevent and stop all illegal Patents, so I believe there are more found in the Office stopped by me, than by any of my Predecessors in so long Time: But since the *Canary Patent* hath made so much Discourse to my Reproach, I shall enlarge upon it, and set down very punctually all the Proceedings I know in that Affair: By which both the Reasonableness and Justice of that Grant will appear, and my Innocence and Unconcernment in it.

About the first *Christmas* after the King's Return into *England*, the Lord Treasurer, the Lord Privy-Seal, my self, and the two Chief Justices (being the Persons appointed by the Statute for that Service) met together to set the several Prices upon the several Wines; and were attended, according to Custom, by the Company of Vintners, and the chief Merchants in the City who traded in that Merchandize; and being first to limit the Merchants to a reasonable Rate, before we could set any Price to the Vintner upon the Retail, we found, by the best Enquiry we could make, that the first Prices beyond the Seas which the Merchants paid for their Wine were so excessive, that the Retail could not be brought within any Compass; and that since the Beginning of the Troubles the Price of Wine in general was exceedingly increased, and particularly that of the *Canaries* was almost double to what it had been in the Year 1640. I knew very well, by the Correspondence I had held in the *Canaries*, (during the Time I served his Majesty as his Ambassador in *Spain*) that the whole Trade of *Canary Wine* was driven solely by the *English*, and the Commodity entirely vented in the King's Dominion, all *Christendom* beside not spending Five Pipes of *Canary Wine*; and therefore I ask'd the Merchants what would be the Way to remedy that Mischief, and whether what I had reported was not true? They confess'd it to be very true, and that it was a great Reproach to our Nation to be so much imposed upon in a Trade that we might govern our selves; and that the unreasonable Prices of the Wine was not the greatest Prejudice that was befallen that Trade: That before the Troubles they had been so far from imploying any Stock of Money, that they sent their Ships fully laden with all Commodities thither, which yielded very good Markets, being sent from thence to the *West-Indies* in their Plate Fleets; that the very Pipe-Staves they carried did very near discharge the Value of the Wine, so that they brought home the Proceed of their other Commodities, either in Pieces of Eight, or such other Merchandize as had been brought thither from the *Indies*, and upon which they received great Profit: That, on the contrary, the Trade is now wholly driven by
ready

ready Money; that the Commodities they send thither will not be taken off, except at their own Prices; so that they have for the late Years sent their Vessels empty thither, except only with some few Pipe-Staves, which, by the Destruction in *Ireland*, they cannot send in any great Proportion from hence; and their Ships return from thence with no other Lading but those Wines, which they pay for in ready Money, either with Pieces of Eight sent in their Ships from hence, or by Bills of Exchange charged upon some known Merchants in *Spain*; that over and above this, they had of late set new Duties upon the Wine, and laid other Impositions upon the Merchants, than the *English* Nation hath been ever accustomed to: They said, that all this proceeded from the immoderate Appetite we have for that sort of Wine, and therefore we take from them as much as they can make; and from our own Disorder and Irregularity in buying them, in contending who shall get the most; and so raising the Prices one upon another, and making the *Spaniards* themselves Judges what we shall pay. My Lords, upon Consultation amongst themselves, found the Matter too hard for them, and that the Reformation of so much Evil must be done by degrees; and upon a Representation of all the Difficulties to his Majesty and his Privy-Council, whose Wisdom could only provide a Remedy proportionable to the Mischiefs; for the present, as they were resolved not to raise the present Prices at which the Wine was bought and sold, (which they believed, how reasonable soever, would be very unpopular) so they thought it not very unjust to draw down or abate those Prices, since it appeared to them that the Wines cost more in Proportion upon the Places of their Growth: They declared therefore to the Merchants and the Vintners, that though for the present they would permit the same Prices to continue for the next Year, which they had been sold for the present Year, and which indeed were confirmed by the Act of Parliament, they should hereafter take care what Markets they made; for that they were resolved the next Year to make the Prices much lower, both to the Merchant and the Vintner: And upon the Report made of the whole Matter to the King in Council, a Proclamation was published accordingly.

The next Year both the Merchants and Vintners were very earnest Suitors, that greater Prices might be allowed; or, at least that the same might be continued; making it very evident that their Wines cost them more than they had done the Year before. Upon the Debate the *Canary* Merchants were much divided; some of them insisting very importunately to have the Prices raised, because it was notorious that they had paid much more, by reason, as they said, that the Vintage had not yielded near the Proportion that it used to do; others, though confessing the Encrease of Price, yet pretending a more publick Spirit, and the Necessity of a Reformation, press'd earnestly that the Price might not be raised, but that they might be permitted to take what they had done already for this Year. It was quickly perceived whence this Moderation proceeded, and that the last Proposers had a great Quantity of Wine upon their Hands, which had been provided the Year before, and so might well be sold at those Prices; but that the former had no Old left upon their Hands, but were supplied with a full Provision of New, which had cost them so much dearer. Both the one and the other desired us, that whatever Resolution we took for the present, a Clause might be inserted in the Proclamation, that the next Year after *Canary* Wine should not be sold for above Twenty Four Pounds the Pipe, and that every Year after it should be drawn

drawn lower, as it might well be, it having been sold in the Year 1640 for Twenty Pounds; though his Majesty found it, at his Return, permitted to be sold at Six and Thirty: Such a Clause, they said, would give Notice to the Islanders, and oblige them to sell their Wine at more reasonable Rates, and render the Merchant unexcusable, if they should give greater. My Lords, notwithstanding all the Allegations, thought fit to bring the Prices of all Wines lower, which they did, as the most effectual Warning for the future; but by his Majesty's Approbation, that Clause was inserted in the Proclamation according as they desired.

The Year following, when the Lords met again according to Custom; (which is as hath been said, about *Christmas*) they found not the least Reformation; on the contrary, that the *Canary* Merchants had paid dearer than ever, which made them all more solicitous to have the Price raised, and the Vintners as importunate for their Retail. And indeed the Vintners were in a much worse Condition than the Merchants, they making it appear that they paid the Merchants much dearer, without which they could get no Wine, and so must give over their House-keeping; that the Penalty upon the Merchant was very small, being not above Forty Shillings a Pipe, and the Crime not easy to be discovered, as was manifest by there being not one Merchant questioned in many Years for that Transgression; whereas, on the contrary, the Penalty upon the Vintners was very severe, and so easily discovered by any Man who went to a Tavern and would be an Informer, that most of the Vintners in *London* were then sued in the *Exchequer* upon those Penalties, which if exacted must produce their present Ruin. The Merchants excuse themselves for their present Pretence, and for their having given more than was lawful for them to have done, by their own Desire, that they had done their best, and that the greatest Traders amongst them had consented not to suffer the Prices to be raised upon them, but that they found it ineffectual; and that though they should give over their Trades, it would produce no Reformation; that the Trade was open to all Adventurers, and that there had been many Ships sent from *England* that very Year by *Jews* and other Tradesmen, who had never before traded to the *Canaries*; insomuch, as when they who had been long bred up to the Trade, and had been long Factors in those Islands, sent their Ships thither, they found other *English* Ships there, and the Wines bought at a greater Price than they had allowed their Factors to give; so that they must either have their Ships return empty and unladen, or take the Wines at the Prices other Men gave; that they had chosen the Latter, as well to continue the Trade, as to draw Home some Part of the Stock they had in that Country; that they could imagine but two ways to reform that Excess; the one by putting the Trade in such a Method, and under such Rules, as might restrain that Licence, and not leave it in the Power of Persons who never had been in the Trade to give Law to it; and by this means the Islanders would find it necessary to set reasonable Prices upon their Commodities, and to yield such other Advantages and Privileges to the Merchants as they had heretofore enjoyed; the other, that the King would by his Proclamation prohibit the Importation of any *Canary* Wines into his Dominions; and hereby he would quickly receive such Propositions from *Spain*, as would put it into his own Power to make the Reformation; otherwise the Islanders were persuaded that *England* could not live without their Wines. The Lords were resolved, notwithstanding all that had been said, that they would execute the former Proclamation, and reduce the Prices of Wines to what had been then determined;

14 *Lord CLARENDON'S Vindication, &c.*

and after they had given a full Account of the whole Business unto the King in Council, the Resolution was approved, and a Proclamation issued out accordingly. The Merchants and the Vintners applied themselves to his Majesty, and to many of my Lords of the Council, and thought they had Incouragement enough from thence to hope for Relief, in an Appeal by Petition to the King and Council; and they had thereupon a Day given them to be heard, many of my Lords thought it very hard, if not unjust, to compel Men to sell cheaper than they bought, which was the Truth of the Case, and which must oblige both Merchants and Vintners to sophisticate and corrupt their Wines to preserve their Estates, which might probably turn to the great Damage of the whole Kingdom, in producing Sicknes and Diseases; and this generous and charitable Consideration prevailed with the major Part of the Lords to be well contented, and to wish that some Indulgence might be exercised towards them. On the contrary, when the King had well weighed the whole Proceedings, and with Trouble and Indignation considered the obstinate Vice of the Nation, which would make us ridiculous to all the World, he express'd a positive Resolution to vindicate himself and his Government from this Reproach. He thought the adhering firmly to the Prices which had been resolved upon would be the best Preface to this Reformation, though it might bring particular Damage to particular Persons; who had yet less Cause to complain, because their own Advice had been followed; and thereupon declared, that he would make no Alteration: but withal told them, that if they could make any Proposition to him for the better Regulation of the Trade (for they had themselves mentioned a Charter) he would graciously receive any Propositions they would make, and gratify them in what was just; and so, notwithstanding all Attempts which were often repeated, the Price set by the Lords was ratified for the Year following.

Shortly after many of the Merchants, who had always traded to the *Canaries*, petitioned the King that they might be Incorporated, and that none might be permitted to trade thither but such who would be of that Corporation, and observe the Constitutions which should be made by them: Which Petition was presented to the King at the Council-Board; and being read, his Majesty (according to his Custom in Matters of Difficulty and publick Concernment) directed it to be laid aside, and read again on that Day Month; in which Time his Majesty presumed that all who would oppose it, would present their Reasons and Objections against it, which he was very desirous to hear. At the Day appointed, though there were no Petitions against it, yet it was observed that there were many of the most eminent Merchants of that Trade whose Names were not to the Petition, nor appeared desirous to have a Charter granted; which his Majesty considering, put off the Debate for another Week; and directed, that the other Merchants by Name should be desired to be present, and to give their Advice freely upon the Point: And there was at that Day a very full Appearance; when his Majesty directed, that a Relation should be made to them of the whole Progress that had been made in the Business, and the Damage and Dishonour the Nation under-went in carrying on of that Trade; that many Merchants had presented a Petition to him, containing an Expedient to bring it into better Order, but finding them not to appear in it, and being informed that they were most engaged in that Trade, he had sent for them to know their Opinion, whether they thought what was proposed to be reasonable, and fit to be granted? and if so, why they did not concern themselves in it? They answered, That the Reason why they had not appeared

peared in it was, because they should be Losers by it, and therefore were not solicitous to obtain a Grant from his Majesty to their own Damage; and so enlarged upon the Nature of the Trade, their long Experience in it, and the Greatness of their Stock, which they should not be allowed to continue under any Regulation: But as they did not think themselves obliged to be solicitous for a Change, so they could not deny, being required by his Majesty to speak the Truth, but that the Proposition that was made, was for the publick Good and Benefit of the Kingdom, and that they could conceive no other Way to redeem that Trade, and the Nation from the Insolence which the *Spaniard* exercised upon us; implying, that if his Majesty would command them, they would likewise concur, and join in carrying on the Service. To which his Majesty giving them gracious Encouragement, they all departed of one Mind, his Majesty remaining confirmed in the former Opinion he had of it. But there remained yet an Objection which was principally insisted upon by the Ministers of the Revenue, who alledged very reasonably, that this new modelling of the Trade must produce some Alteration, and would meet some Opposition from the *Spaniard*, which for the Time would lessen the Customs, and intitle the Farmers to a Defalcation. The Petition was therefore referred to the Farmers of the Customs, who were to attend the next Council-Day: And being then called in, they acknowledged, that the Design proposed would prove very profitable to the Kingdom in many Respects, upon which they enlarged; and that in the End it would not be attended with any Diminution of the Customs; but for the present they said, they could not but expect that the ~~Obstinacy and Contradiction~~ of the *Spaniard* would give such a stop to Trade, at least for one Year, that if his Majesty did not reimburse them for what should fall short in the Customs, they must look to be very great Losers; the Merchants, on the other Hand, offering to be bound, that if they did not the first Year bring in as much as had been usually entered, they would make good what should be wanting to the Farmers upon a Medium; and his Majesty himself declared, that he would not, for a small Damage to himself, hinder the Kingdom from enjoying so great a Benefit; and thereupon he commanded the Solicitor-General, who then attended the Board, to prepare such a Charter, as might provide for all those good Ends which were desired in the Petition, and which had been so largely debated. And I believe there was never a greater Concurrence of the Board in any Direction.

Many Months passed before the Charter was drawn; in which Time I never heard of the least new Objection made against it, or that any Man was unsatisfied with it. After it was ingrossed, and passed the King's Hand, it was brought to the Great Seal; and then the Lord Mayor of *London* and the Court of Aldermen had enter'd a Caveat, and I appointed a Day to hear all Parties. The City alledged an Order made a Year or Two before by the King in Council, upon a Complaint then exhibited by the Court of Aldermen against the *Turkey* Company, and other Corporations, in which they said there were very many Merchants of the best Trades and greatest Estates in the City, who would never take out their Freedom of the City, and so refused to bear any Charge or Office in it, to the very great Prejudice and Dishonour of the City, and of the Government thereof; they being by this Means compelled to call inferior Citizens to be Aldermen, before they had Estates to bear the Charge of it, whilst the gravest and the richest could not be compelled to take it, because they were not Freemen: Besides, the Rules which the King gave upon the Difference then

16 Lord CLARENDON's Vindication, &c.

then in Question, he was pleased to declare, and appointed it to be entred as an Order in the Council-Book, that Provision should be made, that in all Charters which he should hereafter renew or grant to any Companies or Corporations within the City of *London*, that they should first make themselves Freemen of the City, if they were not so before; and therefore that this Charter should not pass the Seals, before several Members, who were named in it, had made themselves Freemen of the City, by which they might be made liable to the Charges of it. The Merchants could not deny, that many of them were not yet Freemen, nor resolved to be: They said, they had never heard of this Order: And I declared to them, that I could not Seal the Charter before they had given Satisfaction in it; and they seemed as positive, that they would rather be without their Charter than submit to the other Inconvenience, and so they departed then; but shortly after they agreed to the Obligation, and a Clause to that purpose was entred in the Charter in the King's Presence, and so returned to me to have the Seal fixed to it.

There were, by this Time, several other new Caveats entred against it; all which I heard, and settled every one of them to their joint Satisfaction. I heard then that there would be some Motions for the stopping it in the *House of Commons*; and some Parliament-Men who served for the Western Boroughs came to me, and desired me that I would not fix the Seal to it till they should be heard, since it would undo their Western Trade; and told me they resolved to move the *House of Commons* to put a stop to it. I informed them of the whole Progress it had had, and told them I believed that they would hardly be able to offer any good Reasons against it: However, since it was known that the Parliament would be prorogued within Ten or Twelve Days, I would suspend the Sealing the Charter whilst the Houses sat, to the end that they might make any Objections against it if they thought fit: But the Parliament rose shortly after without further taking Notice of it; nor did those Parliament-Men, or any others, further solicit me against the passing of it; and so I affixed the Great Seal to it according to my Duty. Thereupon the Company chose a Governour and other Officers, according to their Charter, and made such Orders and By-Laws as they thought fit, for the carrying on and Advancement of their Trade; which they might alter when they found it convenient; and for the present they resolved upon a joint Stock, assigning so many Shares to particular Men. In this Composition and Distribution there happened some Difference between themselves, which could not be taken Notice of Abroad; and even some of them, who first petitioned, and were most solicitous to procure the Charter, did what they could to hinder the Effect of it; sent privately to their Factors at the *Canaries*, to oppose any Orders which should be sent from the Governour and the Company; and that they should do all they could to incense the *Spaniards* against the Charter, promising that their Wine should be taken off in spite of the Corporation: Whereupon great Disorders did arise in the *Canaries* between the *English* themselves; and by the Conjunction of the *Spaniards* with those few *English* who opposed the Charter, they proceeded so far, as to send the principal Factors for the Company out of the Island to *Spain*, and to make a Publick Act by the Governour and Council there, that no Ship belonging to the Company should be suffered to come into the Harbour, or to take in any Lading from the Island: All which were transacted there many Months before it was known in *England*, and probably would have been prevented, or easily reformed, if the breaking out of the Plague

at

at *London*, and the War, had not restrained all *English* Shipping from going to the *Canaries* for the Space almost of a full Year; which Intermifion likewise gave some Advantage here to the Merchants who opposed the Charter, by the not Return of their several Stocks within the Time promised by the Company.

When the King was at *Oxford*, and heard what had passed at the *Canaries*, some Merchants appeared there to petition against the Charter, whereof there were some who were the first Petitioners for it: His Majesty appointed a Day for the solemn Hearing of it, in the Presence of his Privy-Council, the Governor being likewise summoned to be there. Upon opening all their Grievances, the Petitioners themselves confess'd that they could not complain of the Charter; that it was a just and necessary Charter, and for the great Benefit of the Kingdom, though some private Men might for the present be Losers by it; that their Complaint was only against their Constitutions and By-Laws, and their severe Prosecution of them contrary to the Intention of the Charter itself; instancing, among other Things, the very short Day limited by the Charter, after which they could not continue their Trade without being Members of the Corporation; and that Day was so soon after the Sealing of the Charter, that it was not possible for them to draw their Stock from thence in so short a Time. When they had finished all their Objections, the King observed to them, that they complained only of what themselves had done, and not at all of the Charter, which gave them only Authority to chuse a Governor, and make Constitutions and By-Laws; but directed not what those Constitutions and By-Laws should be, which were the Result of their own Consultations, in which the major Part must concur; and of that kind their Joint-Stock was one, which with the rest they might alter again at their next Court, if the major Part were grieved with it: But because they had complained of some Particulars, in which they seem'd to have Reason on their side, his Majesty express'd a willingness to mediate and make an Agreement between them, and thereupon bid the Governor answer such and such Particulars which seem'd to have most of Justice; which he did very much at large, making it clearly appear that they had in Truth little Cause of Complaint; as to the short Day which was assign'd to them for drawing away their Stocks, which had the greatest Semblance of Reason, he said they had no reason to complain of want of Warning, for that the Day was well enough known to them long before the Sealing of the Charter, and might very well have been complied with; but that they knew likewise, that afterwards the Time was enlarged to a Day desired by themselves, that there might be no Cause of Discontent; and thereupon read the Order of the Court to that purpose, which they could not deny in Conclusion; since it appeared that their Stock still remained there, which in Justice belonged to them, whether by their Fault or Misfortune it had not been drawn over. The King perswaded the Governor and his Assistants to give them such Satisfaction in that Particular and others, that before they retired from his Majesty's Presence, they were unanimously agreed upon all their Pretences; and though some of the Lords, upon some Insinuations and Discourses they had heard, had believed the Company to be in the wrong, they were now fully convinced of the contrary, and believed the Charter to be founded upon great Reason of State, and that the Execution of it had been very justifiable and with great Moderation; and it is to be observed, that the Parliament being then assembled at *Oxford*, there was not the least Complaint against that Charter or Corporation.

18 Lord CLARENDON's *Vindication*, &c.

This was the whole Progress of that Affair, and all that I know of the Proceeding in it; in which I must confess, though I had no Hand in the Contrivance, I was fully satisfied in the Justice and Integrity of it, and even in the Necessity in Reason of State; and therefore, upon all the Addresses made to the King or Council in that whole Transaction, I did it may be appear more solicitous and warm for the Dispatch than other Men; and yet I never remember a fuller Concurrence in the whole Board than in this Advice; nor did my Inclination towards it, proceed from any other Motive than that of the Publick Good, without the least Temptation to or Imagination of any Profit or Advantage to my self, to which I have never been thought to be ever inclined; and the Delays I used in the passing this Charter, after it came to be sealed, and my giving Time for the weighing all Objections, and so much opposing the Company, with reference to their being made Freemen of the City, that they departed from me with a Resolution to prosecute the Charter no farther, are no Signs that I had such a mind to please them as a Man would have who was corrupted by them, or who was to have a Share in the Profit of the Patent. For the granting any Injunctions in *Chancery* to stop Proceedings at the Law, against that or any other Charter, I cannot comprehend the meaning of that Charge; and do presume that I have never granted any Injunctions in that Court, but what was agreeable to the Courte and Justice of it, and I am sure was always done in Publick, and upon Debate in the Court.

THE Fourth Article is; *That I have advised and procured divers of his Majesty's Subjects to be imprisoned against Law, in remote Islands, Garrisons, and other Places, thereby to prevent them from the Benefit of the Law; and to introduce Precedents for imprisoning of other of his Majesty's Subjects in like manner.*

I know not what to answer to this Article it being so general, and no particular Person being named; but it is generally known, that I have never taken upon me to commit any Man to Prison, but such who by the Course of the *Chancery* for Matters of Contempt are justly committed. It is probable that I have been present at the Council-Board, when many Persons have been ordered to be committed, and whose Commitment hath by the Wisdom of that Board been thought just and necessary; and therefore I am not to answer apart for any thing done by them, only I may say, that I was frequently of Opinion that the Commitments were very just and very necessary; and it is notoriously known, that by such Commitments a Rebellion hath been sometimes prevented, and that other Persons, who have been afterwards attainted and executed for High Treason, have upon their Examination, and at their Death, confess'd that their Purpose had been to rise in Arms at such and such Times, if their Friends upon whom they had principally relied had not been then committed to Prison; and I well remember, that it was thought fit that most of the Persons who stand attainted for the Murther of the late King, his Majesty's Royal Father, should be removed out of the *Tower*, and dispersed into several Islands and Garrisons; and if any other Persons have been likewise sent thither, I presume it was upon such Reason, as upon a due Examination thereof will make it be thought very just.

THE Fifth Article is, *That I have corruptly sold several Offices contrary to Law.*

This Charge I utterly deny.

THE

Lord CLARENDON's Vindication, &c. 19

THE Sixth Article is, *That I have procured his Majesty's Customs to be Farmed at under Rates, knowing the same; and great pretended Debts to be paid by his Majesty, to the Payment whereof his Majesty was not in Strictness bound; and have received great Sums of Money for procuring the same.*

I have never had any thing to do in disposing of his Majesty's Customs, or any other part of his Revenue; only for some short time after his Majesty's first Arrival in *England*, I, amongst others of my Lords of the Council, was a Commissioner of the Treasury; during which Time, if I am not very much mistaken, there was no Farm lett of any of the Revenue, and the Customs were put into the Hands of Commissioners, to the end that a Computation might be made as near as was possible of the true Value of them, before that it should be put into a Farm, which every Man conceived would be fit to be done as soon as might be. The White Staff was shortly after given to the Earl of *Southampton*, and the Chancellorship of the *Exchequer* to the Lord *Ashley*, I having then resign'd it, and having been before possess'd of it at the Time when the King returned into *England*; and from the Time that these two Officers of the Revenue were made, which determined the former Commission, I never intermeddled in the Customs, or any other Branch of the Revenue; except when the King commanded me to be present in some Consultations which he had with my Lord Treasurer, when there were other of my Lords likewise present; that excellent Person always resorting to the King, for his Direction in all Matters of the least Difficulty which occurred to him in the Administration of his Office; and except the Lord Treasurer himself (with whom I had the Honour to have held a long and a fast Friendship) did desire to confer with me, as he very often did upon many Particulars of his Office, believing that I was not altogether ignorant in that Administration, with which I had been formerly so well acquainted; and that I presume might be the Reason why he did often times procure me to be joined with him in References from the King, upon Matters wholly relating to his own Office. But I never suffered particular Applications to be made to me in those Cases, nor had ever any secret Conference with any Persons who were concerned in such Pretensions. What is meant by my having procured his Majesty's Customs to be Farmed at under Rates, knowing the same; and great pretended Debts to be paid by his Majesty, to the Payment whereof his Majesty was not in Strictness bound, I cannot imagine, except it relates to the Payment of a Debt due from his late Majesty to some of the Farmers; in which, though I had no more to do than in giving Information, and my particular Advice to his Majesty, in the Presence of my Lord Treasurer, the Chancellor of the *Exchequer*, and other of my Lords, and so am not myself responsible for what his Majesty did thereupon, and he did nothing but with the Approbation and Consent of all the rest; yet I think myself obliged upon this Particular, which so much concerns the Honour and Justice of the late King, and of his present Majesty, to enlarge and relate all I know of what their Majesties did, and what induced his present Majesty to do his Part of it. It is notoriously known, that before the late Troubles, and in the very first Entrance into them, his Majesty was necessitated to borrow very great Sums of Money from his then Farmers of his Customs, and to oblige them to stand personally bound for many other great Sums of Money which other Men lent to his Majesty upon their Security. That thereupon, and for the Repayment of those Sums of Money which the Farmers had advanced, and for securing them from any Damage for those Monies

Monies which others had lent upon their Obligations, his Majesty, with the Advice of the then Lord Treasurer and Chancellor of the *Exchequer*, had granted a farther Lease of his Customs to those Farmers for Three or Four Years to come, after the Expiration of their former Lease; with a Covenant on his Majesty's Part, to pay the just Interest of Eight *per Cent.* for all such Monies as were advanced by them, or for which they stood bound; and likewise that they should, out of their growing Rent, deduct all such Sums of Money by the Year, as they had lent, or were bound for. It is as well known, that after the Beginning of the Parliament in 1640, and before the Commencement of the second Lease, the *House of Commons* not only forced the said Farmers to pay a very great Sum of Money for their Presumption in receiving Customs and Impositions upon Merchandize in the former Years, when, as they pretended, such Payments were not due; but took also from them their new Lease granted to them by the King, and so left them without any Capacities of reimbursing themselves of the Money they had lent, and likewise in the Mercy of their Creditors to whom they stood bound; many of whom quickly began to exercise that Severity towards them, that many of the poor Gentlemen had their Estates quickly extended upon Judgments and Recognizances, and their Persons taken in Execution and committed to Prison; where some of them who had been known to have great Estates, as Sir *Paul Pinder*, and others, were forced to end their Days. There were very few Circumstances in the late King's Misfortune, which gave him so much Trouble, or so much afflicted him, as the Sense he had of the hard and unjust Sufferings those poor Gentlemen underwent for him and their Affection to his Service; which he often mentioned, and as often declared, that he held himself obliged to make them full Reparation, as soon as God should enable him. And after he had vouchsafed to make me his Chancellor of the *Exchequer*, he frequently spoke to me of it; of the very good Opinion he had of the Men, of the great Services they had done for him; and commanded me expressly, that when ever it should fall within my Power, I would do them all the Right I could. And of this I did often inform his Majesty during the Time he was Abroad, and after his Return, without any other Motive than his Father's Command and his own Honour, having my self never had any Degree of Friendship with any of the Persons concerned, and a very ordinary Acquaintance with some of them. Upon his Majesty's happy Return, those Gentlemen who were alive of the old Farmers (which, as I remember, were Sir *John Jacob*, Sir *Job Harby*, Sir *Nicholas Crispe*, and Sir *John Harrison*) applied themselves to the King, having lain several Years, and then remaining in Execution in some Prison, and having had their Estates sold, upon the Prosecution of those Creditors to whom they were bound for Monies lent to his Majesty. As soon as Care was taken for collecting the Revenue, those Four Gentlemen named before, and Two others who had served his Majesty very well, were appointed his Commissioners for the Collecting the Customs and Duties upon Trade; in which Collection they continued for above a Year, or thereabouts; during which Time many of their Creditors, who had generously forbore to prosecute them whilst they were in Prison and undone, began now to commence their Actions against them, presuming they were then or would shortly be able to satisfy them: Whereupon his Majesty commanded my Lord Treasurer and me, with some others Lords, as I remember, to send for those Creditors, and to declare to them, that his Majesty would in a short Time enable his Farmers to pay them their just Debts, which he well knew were contract-

ed

ed for his Service; and that he would take it very well from them, if they would for the present give no Obstruction to his Service, by the Prosecution of those Persons at Law, whose Time was solely taken up in the necessary Service of his Majesty: Whereupon they willingly desisted from that Prosecution; and many of them finding now, that by his Majesty's Favour they were like to receive their Debts, which before they thought desperate, they frankly remitted the Whole or Part of the Interest, that in Strictness of Law was still due to them. His Majesty shortly after, judging it best for his Profit to determine the Collection by Commission, and to Lett the Whole to Farm, gave Direction to the Lord Treasurer to confer and treat with any fit Persons who desired the same. Many Overtures were made by several Persons, and some applied themselves directly to his Majesty; upon which, and after a competent Time in considering all that was proposed, the King appointed a Day when he would be attended by my Lord Treasurer, and other of my Lords, and when all the Pretenders should likewise be present, and he would then and there declare his own Judgment; having first declared to the Commissioners, whereof Four were old Farmers to whom so much Money was due, that whosoever should take the Farm they should be obliged to pay them their just Debt at such Times and by such Proportions as his Service could bear; but as to the Letting the Farm it self, he should neither consider the Debt he owed them, nor the Sufferings they had undergone, but only the Rent they should offer; which, if as much as any Body else would give, he would prefer their Persons before others; but if any other fit Men would offer more than they thought fit to give, they should be his Farmers; and therefore wished them well to consider what they would propose to him. After two Days spent by his Majesty in Conference with several Pretenders apart, and finding that the Proposition made to him by the old Farmers, with whom the other Two were to be joined who had served with them as Commissioners, were at least as much if not more for his Profit than any which had been made by the rest, he declared that the Farm should be Lett to those who had been his Commissioners: Which was at that Time understood to be so far from a good Bargain, that the Two Commissioners who were not concerned in the great Debt, utterly refused to meddle with the Farm at so great a Rent; the other Four publicly declaring at the same time, that they would not give the Rent but in Contemplation of their Debt, which they thought they should sooner and better receive, when it should be assigned upon their own Collections, than when it should be charged upon new Farmers; but were Suitors to his Majesty, that he would oblige the other Two (*Sir John Wolstenholme* and *Sir John Sharw*) to be joint Farmers with them; which his Majesty did, by making them a gracious Promise that if they should be Losers he would repair them: And thereupon Directions were given to Mr. Attorney-General to prepare a Grant accordingly; and I do not know there was one dissenting Voice from what his Majesty inclined to do upon the whole Debate of that Matter, the same appearing to every Man to be most just and reasonable.

The Farm being thus settled, the old Farmers were directed to bring their Accompt to my Lord Treasurer; by which it should manifestly appear how much the late King was justly, and truly indebted to them, and how those Debts were incurred; that so, upon a just Computation, such a Satisfaction might be made to them, as was consistent with the present State of his Majesty's Occasions. Many Months, if not a whole Year, were spent in the Examination of those Accompts before the Auditors;

G

who,

who, besides the Exceptions they took for want of some Formalities, in the Proof of some Monies paid, which after Twenty Years of Licence, in which all their Books and Papers had been taken, their Houses plunder'd, their Persons imprisoned, and in which so many Persons employed by the King to receive and by them to pay Money were dead, could hardly be made with the usual Exactness, made likewise several Certificates of particular Cases, which required further Direction; and the Lord Treasurer would never take upon himself to give those Directions, only declaring to them, which he had frequently done, that, in regard his Majesty was not strictly bound in Justice to pay that Debt due from his Father, but that his present Majesty's Generous and Royal Disposition had prevailed with him to pay that just Debt, whereby they might be preserved from Ruin, in which he said he fully concurred with his Majesty; but that he would never advise him, on the contrary he would always dissuade his Majesty from paying or allowing any Interest, though paid by them, which would swell the Debt to such a Proportion, that his Majesty could never undertake the Payment of it: Which Determination, how great soever their Loss appeared to be, seemed to be so just, at least so necessary for the King, that they wholly referred it to his Majesty; hoping that it might prevail with many of their Creditors not to exact it from them, though the Sale of their whole Estates had made Satisfaction to others for the whole Interest as well as for the Principal. When the Auditors Certificate was ready, and all the Doubts and Questions which did arise thereupon were clearly stated, his Majesty vouchsafed again to be present, with the other Lords who had from the Beginning assisted in the Examination of that Business; and then the Lord Treasurer declared to his Majesty, what he had before said to the Persons concerned, that though he willingly approved his Majesty's Goodness in taking upon himself that great Debt, yet that he would by no means give his Advice or Consent that he should pay or allow any Interest for it. Upon the whole Matter, and upon all the Doubts stated to his Majesty, and after the Rejection of several considerable Sums of Money demanded by them, and for the Payment whereof such direct Proof was not made as is required by the Course of the *Exchequer*; though I think most Persons who were present, were in their private Consciences well satisfied that those Sums had been in truth paid, as was alledged; there appeared to his Majesty to be justly due to them the Sum of Two Hundred Thousand Pounds Principal Money for almost Twenty Years, and for which they had paid so much Interest; and his Majesty thought it very just, and, with many gracious Expressions to them of his Purpose and Resolution further to repair them as he should be able, gave order to the Lord Treasurer that the said Debt of Two Hundred Thousand Pounds should be paid to them in Five Years; that is, by Forty Thousand Pounds for every Year out of the Rent of the Farm; and that all Instruments necessary for their Satisfaction and Security should be presently given to them, whereby they might be able to comply with their Creditors, and avoid their Importunity. I do confess myself to have been present at these Agitations, and to have contributed my humble Advice and Opinion to his Majesty that he should pay this Debt; which I thought my self obliged to do, as well as a faithful Counsellor to his present Majesty, as in Discharge of my Duty and Obligation to his Father; and I have very good reason to believe, that if that Two Hundred Thousand Pounds be paid according to his Majesty's Direction, of which I know nothing, and of which the Heirs and Executors of those Farmers who are dead, as well

as the Four present Farmers, have their equal Proportions, that the said Persons have not at this Day half the Estates which they had in the Year 1640, when they entred into those Engagements for his Majesty: nor was there any one Person present at the Agitation of this Affair, who seem'd in the least degree to differ in Opinion, or to dissuade his Majesty to give that Satisfaction for that Debt which he vouchsafed to do.

I do likewise very willingly confess, that I have in the manner aforesaid, and being called to advise, given my Opinion for the Payment of many other considerable Debts incurred by his late Majesty; and for which many Persons of Honour, who adhered to him during the War, were personally bound for him, and whose Estates had been extended, and their Persons imprisoned for the same; many of whom were then in Execution, and in Prison when his Majesty returned, and others then sued in *Westminster-Hall* in his Majesty's own Court. His late Majesty having granted under his Great Seal of *England*, to several Persons intrusted for the rest, many of his Forrests, Parks and other Lands for their Security and Indemnity, who were or should stand bound for him, for Monies which were then borrowed for, and applied to the necessary Support of himself and his Army, and to no other Purpose; and in that Grant I was particularly entrusted, as well by the Desire of the Persons concerned as by his Majesty's Command, to be solicitous for their Satisfaction: And I cannot deny that I have never been more delighted, than when I have been able to procure any Satisfaction for those Persons who were so bound and so secured; nor ever more troubled than that I could do no more, and that there remain so many still unsatisfied, and almost undone for those Debts so contracted, of which Number I believe there are still too many. But having made these clear Confessions of what is Truth, and what I did do in these Transactions, I must as positively deny, that ever I procured or advised the Letting his Majesty's Customs, or any other Part of his Revenue; on the contrary, that I used all the Ways I could to advance the Rents without respect of Persons; and I presume I was never present at the Letting of any Farm that any Man would have given more for, than they did to whom it was Lett, what Offers soever were made afterwards, when his Majesty had contracted himself, and a Grant was issued accordingly under the Great Seal of *England*: And I do as positively deny, that ever I received or expected the least Sum of Money, or Money-worth, for any Lease made by his Majesty of his Customs, or any other Part of his Revenue; or for the Payment of any one Debt made by his Majesty, to which he was or was not bound; I having never had any other Motive for the Performance of those Offices, but the pure and entire Consideration of his Majesty's Honour, Justice and Profit, and my own Inclination to gratify worthy Persons, who in Justice ought to be, or might with Justice be gratified and obliged, and who have commonly been such Persons to whom I have had no kind of Obligation.

THE Seventh Article is, *That I have received great Sums of Money from the Company of Vintners, or some of them, or their Agents, for increasing the Prices of Wines, and for freeing them from the Payment of legal Penalties which they had incurred.*

If I had been in the least Degree guilty of this Charge, it would very easily have been proved, and the *Vintners* would very gladly have helped them in it, being Persons who never thought themselves beholden to me, and so not obliged to conceal any of my Corruptions. They well knew that

24 Lord CLARENDON'S *Vindication*, &c.

I could never be prevailed with to consent to the inhancing the Prices of their Wine, and that I never had the least Sum of Money from them in my Life. I remember, at a Time when his Majesty had refused to grant all their other Petitions, the Company of *Vintners* did complain that there were so many Informations against them prosecuted by Informers in the *Exchequer*, that they must give over their Trades, and be likewise undone, if they were severely prosecuted for what was past; and therefore besought his Majesty in Council, that he would pardon what was past, and that for the future they would trespass no more. Whereupon his Majesty thought it worthy of his Mercy to shelter them for the present from that Prosecution; and thereupon commanded his Attorney-General to call the Informers before him, and to appoint the *Vintners* to pay them such reasonable Rewards for their Pains as he thought fit, and thereupon he should enter a *Noli Prosequi*; but his Majesty charged them for the future, not to run into the same Danger: And as this Grace from his Majesty was not upon my Promotion, but purely from his own Bounty and Goodness, from which no Person there dissuaded him, as I remember, so I never received the least Profit from the same.

THE Eighth Article is, *That I have in a short Time gained to my self a far greater Estate than can be imagined to be lawfully gained in so short a Time; and contrary to my Oath have procured several Grants under the Great Seal from his Majesty, to my self and Relations, of several of his Majesty's Lands, Hereditaments, and Leases, to the Disprofit of his Majesty.*

I wish with all my Heart that the Truth of this Article (which I presume hath drawn on all the rest) were clearly known to all the World; that they who in Truth believe that I have so great an Estate, were very well informed what it is, and they would then clearly discern that I need not be ashamed of having gotten such an Estate, nor needed to have any recourse to any ill Arts or Means for the obtaining thereof; they would know that I have been so far from procuring several Grants under the Great Seal of *England* from his Majesty, to my self and Relations, of several of his Majesty's Lands, Hereditaments, and Leases, to the Disprofit of his Majesty, that I never moved his Majesty in my Life, for any one Grant to my self, or any of my Relations. If his Majesty's Royal Bounty did dispose him to confer somewhat of Benefit and Advantage upon an old Servant, who had waited upon his Father and himself near Thirty Years in some Trust and Employment; I hope it shall not be imputed as a Crime in me to receive his Favours. I am far from believing or imagining that the poor Services I ever did, or can do, were in any Degree proportionable to his Majesty's Bounty; yet since his Goodness thought me fit for it, I hope many others will think so too; at least as fit as some Men, who have received greater Marks and Proportions of it than I have done, and who, though they might serve much better, had not served so long. I forbear to enlarge upon this particular Charge, because I conceive that it is now evident to many who were wrought upon by those who did not believe it themselves, to think my Estate to be very great, that the Information they received was without ground: And whoever considers, that the first Year after the King's coming in yielded justly more Profit to the Great Seal than I ever received in all the Years following, and some particular Acts of Bounty in his Majesty conferred on me, without the least Suit of my own, and unthought of by me, will believe that my Fault is greater in
having

having no better an Estate, than that what I have hath been gotten by Corruption. I have none of his Majesty's Lands but what I bought, for as much as any Body would pay for it, of those who had the same granted to them out of his Majesty's Bounty, and that Grant confirmed by Act of Parliament; and, I presume, it cannot have fallen from his Majesty's Memory, and I am sure is well known to some Persons of Honour yet alive, that when his Majesty was graciously pleased, at his first coming over, to offer me some Land which had never yielded the Crown any thing, I absolutely refused to receive it, because it was generally thought to be of great Value, as I believe it is; and therefore I would not expose my self to the Envy which naturally attends such Donations, having in truth never had an immoderate Appetite to make haste to be rich; and as much apprehended the being accused of Witchcraft or Burglary, as of Bribery and Corruption. In a word, I do declare, that my Debts being discharged, for which I pay Interest, all my Estate is not worth, being sold, the Money I have received from his Majesty's own Royal Bounty, and far from being suitable to the Quality I yet hold, and which was never obtained by my own Ambition, as many Persons of Honour yet alive can testify.

THE Ninth Article is, *That I introduced an arbitrary Government in his Majesty's foreign Plantations, and have caused such as complained thereof before his Majesty and Council, to be long imprisoned for so doing.*

Though I cannot possibly comprehend the full Meaning of this Article, yet because I have heard of many Discourses made of the Authority I assumed over the Plantations, and the great Advantage and Profit I have drawn to my self from thence, I am very willing to take this Occasion to relate all that I know, and all that I have done with reference to any of his Majesty's Plantations; declaring, in the first Place, that at his Majesty's Return, and before, I did use all the Endeavours I could to prepare and dispose the King to a great Esteem of his Plantations, and to encourage the Improvement of them by all the Ways which could reasonably be proposed to him; and I was confirmed in this Opinion and Desire, as soon as I had a View of the Entries in the *Custom-House*, by which I found what a great Revenue accrued to the King from those Plantations, insomuch as the Receipts from thence had upon the Matter repaired the Decrease and Diminution of the Customs, which the late Troubles had brought upon other Parts of Trade, from what it had formerly yielded. The first Consideration that offered it self before the King that related to the Plantations, was concerning the *Barbadoes*, which having been most discoursed of since, and, as I hear, with some Reflections upon me of Partiality and Injustice, I shall, in the first Place, set down all I know in that Affair, and how I came to speak in it.

Before the Beginning of the late Troubles, the King had granted the Island of the *Barbadoes* to the Earl of *Carlisle* and his Heirs for ever, upon a Supposition that it had been first discovered, possessed, and planted at his Charge; and the said Earl sent a Governour and People thither, and enjoyed it to his Death, and by his Will settled it for the Payment of his Debts, which were very great: The Troubles falling out in a short Time after, little or no Profit had been drawn from thence towards the Satisfaction of those Debts, and the Executors and Trustees totally neglected the taking Care of it, or prosecuting the Plantation; but in and after the War, many Citizens, Merchants, and Gentlemen, who were willing, or forced to withdraw themselves from *England*, transported themselves thither, and there

H

planted,

planted, without asking any Body's Leave, or without being opposed or contradicted by any Body. About the Year 1647, or thereabouts, the late Earl of *Carlisle*, Son and Heir of the former Earl, to whom the Inheritance of that Island belonged, treated with the late Lord *Willoughby* of *Parham*, how that Island might be so ordered, that the Plantation might be advanced, and Profit made by it, which would at last redound to himself when the Debt should be paid. The late King was then in the Hands of the Army; and with his Approbation and Consent, it was agreed between the said Earl and the said Lord, that a Lease should be made by the Earl of *Carlisle* to the Lord *Willoughby*, of all the Profits which should arise out of that Plantation for the Term of Twenty One Years, as I remember; a Moiety of the whole Profits to be received by the Lord *Willoughby* himself, for his own Use, and recompence of his Charge and Pains; and he was likewise to receive a Commission from the said Earl, to be Governour of that and the rest of the *Caribee* Islands (all which were comprehended in the Charter granted by the King to the Earl of *Carlisle*) and that a Commission should likewise be procured from the King, or the Prince of *Wales*, by which the said Lord *Willoughby* was to be constituted Governour of the said Islands. About that Time the Fleet then in the *Downs* returned to their Obedience to the King, withdrawing themselves to the Coast of *Holland*, to offer their Service to the Prince of *Wales*, his Majesty that now is; the Lord *Willoughby* coming likewise over then to him, to serve him in any Condition he pleased to employ him. I need not speak of the Disappointments of that Summer, and the ill Success of that Fleet; but all those Hopes being vanished, and there being no present Employment for the Lord *Willoughby*, he then informed the Prince of what had passed between the Earl of *Carlisle* and him, with his Father's Consent; which his Highness had likewise received from the King himself, with much Recommendation of the Lord *Willoughby*. I was then attending upon the Prince in *Holland*, as one of the King's Council assigned by him for that Service. Upon the understanding of this whole Case, the Prince, upon the unanimous Advice of the Council, thought fit to grant such a Commission of Governour of the *Barbadoes* and other Islands, as he desired; and he had the more reason to desire it (notwithstanding the Earl of *Carlisle*'s Grant and Commission) because the principal Planters upon the *Barbadoes* had been Officers in the King's Army, or of manifest Affection to him, or always looked upon as of his Party. With this Commission the Lord *Willoughby* had, at his great Charge and Expence, transported himself to the *Barbadoes*, and was there received as Governour; and made a Contract with the Planters, that so much should be paid upon the Hundred to the Earl of *Carlisle*, to whom the Propriety of the Whole belonged. But before this Agreement could be well executed, or any Profit drawn from thence, the Island was reduced to the Service of the Parliament, and of *Cromwell*, and a Governour appointed by them; the Lord *Willoughby* being sent into *England*, where he remained till the King's Return, and had given unquestionable Evidence of his Affection to the King's Service, for which he had often been committed to Prison before and after *Cromwell*'s Death.

As soon as the King returned, the Lord *Willoughby* (who had then Eight or Nine Year to come of his Lease formerly granted to him by the Earl of *Carlisle*, who was then likewise living and ready to do any other Act to the Lord *Willoughby*'s Advantage) resolved to return himself to the *Barbadoes*, and desired the King to renew his Commission to him for the Government;

vernment; which his Majesty was very willing to do, as to a Person he esteemed very much, and who had spent very much of his own Fortune, as is notoriously known, in that Service: But the *Barbadoes* and all those other Islands were now become of another Consideration and Value than they had been of before the Troubles; the *Barbadoes* itself was (by that Confluence and Resort thither as was mentioned before) so fully planted that there was no room for new Comers, and they had sent very many of their People to the other Islands to plant; many Citizens of *London* had raised very great Estates there, and every Year had a great Revenue thence; and the King's Customs from that one Island came to a very great Sum of Money yearly. All these Men, who had entred upon that Plantation as a waste Place, and with very great Charge brought it to that Perfection, and with great Trouble, began now to apprehend that they must depend upon the good Will of the Earl of *Carlisle* and Lord *Willoughby* for the Enjoyment of their Estates there, which they looked upon as their own; all these Men joined together in an Appeal to the King, and humbly pray'd his Protection: And that they might not be oppress'd by those Two Lords, they said, they were the King's Subjects; that they had repaired thither as to a desolate Place, and had by their Industry obtained a Livelihood there, when they could not with a good Conscience stay in *England*; that if they were now left to those Lords to ransom themselves and compound their Estates, they must leave the Country, and the Plantation would be destroyed, which yielded his Majesty so great a Revenue; that they could defend themselves by Law against the Earl of *Carlisle's* Title, if his Majesty did not countenance it by a new Grant of the Government to the Lord *Willoughby*; and therefore were Suitors to his Majesty not to destroy them by that Countenance. At the same Time, the Creditors of the late Earl of *Carlisle* (whose Debts were to be satisfied by the Profits of that Plantation, by the Will and Settlement of the said Earl) petitioned the King that they might be first provided for; their principal Money due to them at the Death of the Earl amounted to no less than Fifty Thousand Pounds, of which they had never yet received one Penny; and therefore that the Profits which should arise ought in the first Place to be applied to them, there having been many Families utterly ruined for want of their Money so due to them. The King appointed to hear all the several Pretences at the Council-Board, where they all attended with their Counsel; and after his Majesty had spent three or four Days himself in hearing the several Allegations, and finding new Pretences and Difficulties every Day to arise, (which shall be mentioned anon,) his Majesty appointed several of my Lords of the Council to consider of the whole Matter, and to confer with the several Parties, and if it were possible to make an End between them by their own Consent; otherwise to report the several Titles to his Majesty, with such Expedients as in their Judgments they thought most likely to produce a general Satisfaction, without endangering the Plantation, the Preservation whereof his Majesty took to Heart. I had the Honour to be one of that Committee, and took very much Pains in reading the Charters, Grants, and Leases, and many other Papers and Dispatches which concerned that Affair, and conferred with several of the Persons interested, to the End that I might the better discern what could be done, having never understood or heard any thing of the Matter, or that concerned that Plantation, otherwise than what I have before set down upon the Dispatch of the Lord *Willoughby* in *Holland*; nor had I the least Inclination or Byass to any Party. Upon the
hearing

hearing all the Allegations before my Lords, the several Pretences and Titles appeared to us to be these; which we afterwards reported to the King.

The Lord *Willoughby* demanded nothing from the King but his Commission to be Governour for the Remainder of the Years which had been granted to him by the Earl of *Carlisle*, to the end that he might receive one Moiety of those Profits which should arise to the Earl, and which had been assigned to him with the Consent and Approbation of the late King, and his Majesty that now is, upon which he had undertaken that Voyage, and spent so much of his Estate.

The Earl of *Carlisle*, while this Contention was depending, died, and by his Will devised his Interest in the *Barbadoes* to the Earl of *Kinnoul*, who likewise petitioned the King for the preserving his Right; but neither he, nor the Person under whom he claimed, had any Pretence till all the Debts were satisfied, nor did the Earl of *Kinnoul* demand any thing till then; but believed the Profit would arise yearly to so much, that the Debts would quickly be satisfied, and then the Whole would come to him.

There was another Title that preceded the Earl of *Carlisle's*, which was that of the Earl of *Marlborough*, who alledged and proved it to be true, that the *Barbadoes* and those adjacent Islands were first granted by the King to his Grandfather the Earl of *Marlborough*, then Lord High-Treasurer of *England*, before the Earl of *Carlisle* had any Pretence thereunto; and that the Lord Treasurer had afterwards consented that the same should be granted to the Earl of *Carlisle*, upon a full Contract, that he should first receive for ever the Sum of Three Hundred Pounds by the Year out of the first Profits of the Plantations; which Sum of Three Hundred Pounds had never been yet paid; and therefore the Earl of *Marlborough* desired, as Heir to his Grandfather, to have Satisfaction for the Arrears, and that the growing Rent might be secured to him.

The Creditors were of two kinds: The First, and who had first petitioned the King, as was said before, had an Assignment made to them by the Executors and Trustees of the Earl of *Carlisle* upon his Will, and who, at his Death, owed them the full Sum of Fifty Thousand Pounds or thereabouts: The other Creditors consisted of several Tradesmen and Artificers, to whom the said Earl was indebted for Wares and Goods which had been delivered for his Use, and of several Servants for their Arrears of Wages; and all these had, during the late Troubles, exhibited their Bill in *Chancery* against the Executors and Overseers of the late Earl, and had obtained a Decree in that Court for their Satisfaction, out of the Profits of those Plantations; which Decree stood confirmed by the Acts of judicial Proceedings; and as I remember their Debts amounted to Thirty Thousand Pounds, or thereabouts: None of the Creditors in general, of one or the other sort, had ever received One Shilling from the Time that the Earl had first assigned it.

The Planters insisted positively, that the Charter granted to the Earl of *Carlisle* from the King was void in Point of Law; for which their Council alledged many Reasons: and having spent much Time upon that Argumentation, they concluded with two humble Propositions to the King; First, That his Majesty would give them leave to prosecute in his Name in the *Exchequer*, and at their own Charge, to repeal that Grant to the Earl of *Carlisle*; by which they should be freed from the Arbitrary Power and Oppression which would be exercised upon them under the Colour of that Charter, and his Majesty might receive a great Benefit to himself, by
taking

by taking the Sovereignty to himself, to whom it justly belonged: And in that case they offer'd in their own Names, and for the rest of the Planters who were in the Island, to consent to an Imposition of so much upon the Hundred, which they confidently avowed would amount to at least Ten Thousand Pounds a Year; out of which his Majesty's Governour might be well supported, and his Majesty dispose of the Overplus as he thought fit. Secondly, if his Majesty would not suffer the Charter to be repealed, that he would leave those who claimed under the Earl of *Carlisle's* Patent to their Remedy at Law, and leave the Planters to their own Defence; which they hoped in Justice could not be denied to them, since they alone had been at the Charge to settle the Plantation, which brought so great a Revenue every Year to his Majesty, when the Earl had not been at the least Expence thereupon; and if his Majesty should not assist their Pretences with his Royal Authority, they must all quit the Plantation, which would be to his Majesty's great Damage.

These being the several Pretences of the several Persons, and nothing being to be done by any Agreement between themselves, their Interests being so distinct and inconsistent with each others; his Majesty thought fit, in the first Place, to refer the Consideration of the Legality and Validity of the Patent to his Council at Law; who, upon full Deliberation after the Hearing of all Parties, returned their Opinion that their Patent was void, and that his Majesty might take the same into his own Power. This Report was no sooner made to his Majesty, but that he very graciously declared, he would not from hence receive any Benefit and Advantage to himself, until all their Pretences had received Satisfaction; and that he would make no other Use of avoiding the said Charter, than to dispose the Profits of the Plantation to those, who in Justice had any Pretence in Law or Equity to receive the same; and therefore, that the Lord *Willoughby* should proceed in his Voyage to the *Barbadoes*, and should receive according to his Bargain a Moiety of the Profits, and that the other should be disposed of for the Satisfaction of the Debts and other Incumbrances; in order to which, his Majesty appointed the same Committee of the Lords to meet again, and to adjust the several Proportions.

When they met, they had all the Persons concerned present with them, or ready to be called in upon any Occasion; and they all appeared very glad that the King had taken the Care and Protection of the Plantation upon himself, which was all the Security the Planters had or could desire; and the Lords first Care was to make some Computation of what might be depended upon as the Yearly Revenue that would arise upon the Imposition within the Island: But the Planters could not be drawn to any particular Agreement in that Point, not so much as to consent to what should be imposed upon every Hundred; but, on the contrary, declared that too much had been undertaken in that kind by one of their own Number (Mr. *Kendale*) in his Discourse before the King in the Council, and declared that the Plantation could not bear the Imposition he had mentioned; that whatsoever was to be done of this Nature was to be transacted by an Assembly in the Island; and that all that they could promise for themselves was, that they would use their utmost Endeavours with their Friends in the Island, that when the Lord *Willoughby* should arrive there and call an Assembly, they should consent to as great an Imposition as the Plantation would bear; by which a good Revenue would arise to the King for the Purposes aforesaid.

The Creditors had great Reason to be glad of the Resolution his Majesty had taken; for though it would be a long Time before they could be fully satisfied out of a Moiety of the Profits, tho' it should arise to the highest Computation; yet in Time they should receive all, and should every Year receive some: which would lessen their Debt, and relieve those who were in the highest Necessities, of which there was a great Number; whereas they had hitherto, in so many Years, received not one Penny; and it was evident, that without his Majesty's Authority they never should, since the Planters were resolved never to consent to any Imposition, or submit to any Authority that should be exercised under the Earl of *Carlisle's* Patent without a due Course of Law, the Way to obtain which would be very difficult to find out; and they understood well enough, that without his Majesty's Grace and Bounty to them, the repeal or avoiding the Earl of *Carlisle's* Patent would put a quick End to all their Pretences.

The greatest Difficulty that did arise was from the Earl of *Kinoule*, to whom the last Earl of *Carlisle* had devised these Islands by his Will; and he had a great Mind to go thither himself, and take Possession of his Right; and his Council had persuaded him, that the King's Charter granted to the first Earl of *Carlisle* was good and valid in Law, and that they believed they could maintain and defend it in any Court of Justice. Then his own Estate in *Scotland* was so totally lost by the Iniquity of the Times, and by his Father's having so frankly declared himself for the King, when very few of that Nation lost any thing by their Loyalty, that he had very little left to support himself; and therefore was willing to retire into any Place Abroad, where he might find but a bare Subsistence: But when he considered again, that he could have no Pretence to any thing in the *Barbadoes*, till after all the Creditors were fully satisfied, and how long it was like to be before they could be satisfied, there remaining still due to the Creditors of both kinds no less than Fourscore Thousand Pounds Sterling Principal Money, he did not believe that his insisting upon the Patent would be worth the Charge and Hazard he must inevitably be put to; and therefore, upon further Deliberation with his Friends, he willingly referr'd himself and all his Interest to the King's gracious Determination, as all the rest of the Pretenders and interested Persons had done.

The Case being thus fully stated to the Lords, and every Man's Interest or Pretence clearly appearing to them, they considered seriously amongst themselves what they might reasonably propose to the several Persons, in order to their Agreement amongst themselves; and that proving ineffectual, what Advice they might reasonably give his Majesty. They were unanimously of Opinion, not to advise his Majesty to cause the Patent to be called in Question; for though they doubted not, upon the Opinion of his Learned Council, that the same would be adjudged void and illegal; yet they did not think it a seasonable Time when the Nation is so active and industrious in Foreign Plantations, that they should see a Charter or Patent questioned, and avoided, after it had been so many Years allowed and countenanced, and under which it had so long flourished, and was almost grown to Perfection; and that since his Majesty had declared, that notwithstanding any Right of his own, all possible Care should be taken for the Satisfaction of the Creditors, as well as for the Preservation and Support of the Plantation, it wou'd be equally equitable and honourable in his Majesty not to leave the Earl of *Kinoule* the only Person unconsidered, and bereaved of all his Pretence; but that they would humbly move his Majesty, that he would graciously vouchsafe to assign some present Maintenance

tenance to the said Earl, which his unhappy Condition required, out of the Revenue which should be there settled, and until the Debts should be paid; and that after that Time such an Augmentation might be made to him as his Majesty in his Royal Bounty should think fit; in Consideration whereof the Earl should procure the Patent to be brought in and surrendered; which he promised should be done accordingly, as soon as the Settlement should be made of that Proportion which should be assigned to him.

That the Lord *Willoughby* should enjoy the Benefit of his former Contract with the Earl of *Carlisle*, and approved by his Majesty, during the Remainder of those Years which are not yet expired; that he should make what haste he could thither and call an Assembly, to the end that such any Imposition might be agreed upon to be paid to his Majesty as should be reasonable, in Consideration of the great Benefit they had already and should still enjoy, in being continued and secured in their several Plantations, of which as yet they were as it were but Tenants at Will, having no other Pretence of Right but the Possession; and therefore, that those Merchants and Planters who had petitioned the King should, according to their Obligation and Promise made by them to his Majesty, use all their Credit with those in the Island, that the Imposition might arise to such a Proportion that the Revenue might answer the Ends proposed, and that one Moiety of that Revenue should be enjoyed by the Lord *Willoughby* for his Term.

That the Annuity of Three Hundred Pounds a Year should be paid to the Earl of *Marlborough*, according to the original Contract mentioned before; and that the Assignment that his Majesty would likewise be pleased to make to the Earl of *Kinoule*, should be likewise first paid; and then that the Remainder of that Moiety should be received to the Use of the Creditors; and that when the Lord *Willoughby's* Term should be expired, his Majesty should be desired, after the Reservation of so much as he should think fit for the Support of his Governour, that all the Remainder might be continued towards the Creditors, whilst their just Debts should be paid.

These Particulars appearing reasonable to the Lords, all Persons concerned were called, and the same communicated to them, who appeared all well contented; and thereupon the Lords resolved to present the same to his Majesty, which they did accordingly at the Board, and his Majesty with a full Approbation and Advice of the whole Council ratified the same; whereupon that Order was made by his Majesty in Council, which comprehends all the Particulars mentioned before, which was delivered to the Lord *Willoughby*, with his Majesty's express Command, that he should see it punctually and precisely executed; and the like Order was delivered by the Clerk of the Council to every other Person mentioned, who desired the same: To which Order I do for the more Certainty refer my self, being in no degree confident (having at this Time no other Help than my Memory) that it is set down with that Exactness as it ought to be. As I have throughout this Affair taken very great Pains to reduce it to this particular Agreement, which at that Time seemed to be satisfactory to all the Persons concerned, so I had not the least Temptation of particular Benefit to my self; and I do still believe it to be very just, and reasonable, and agreeable to his Majesty's Justice and Goodness, all Circumstances being considered; and though it may be, in Strictness of Law, and by the avoiding the Grant made to the Earl of *Carlisle*, his Majesty might have possessed himself of the whole Island, without any tender Consideration of the Planters or of the Creditors, I am not ashamed that I never gave his Majesty that or the like Counsel, in this or any other Matter of the like Nature;

Nature; and if I had, I am confident his Majesty would have abhorred it, and not have thought the better of me for giving it.

The other Part of this Article, That I have caused such as complained of the arbitrary Government in the Plantations before the King and Council, to be long imprisoned for so doing, doth refer, I suppose, to the Commitment of one *Farmer*; who being sent over a Prisoner by the Lord *Willoughby*, in a Ship that came from thence, made his Appearance at *Oxford*, his Majesty being then there in the Sickness-Time, which was the first time I ever heard of the Man, or of the Matter; and at the same Time one of the Secretaries of State received a Letter from the Lord *Willoughby*, which was sent by the same Ship, in which his Lordship had sent a direct full Charge of Mutiny, Sedition, and Treason against him; and by his Letter, informed the Secretary of all the Behaviour and Carriage of the said *Farmer*, with all the Circumstances thereof; and that he had, by his seditious Practices, prevailed so far upon a disaffected Party in that Island, that the Lord *Willoughby* was obliged in the Instant to send him aboard the Ship, without which he did apprehend a general Revolt in the Island from his Majesty's Obedience: And the Lord *Willoughby* likewise desired that *Farmer* might not be suffered to return thither before the Island should be reduced to a better Temper. The Man was called in before the King and Council, and the Charge which the Lord *Willoughby* had sent read to him: the greatest Part whereof he could not deny; and in his Discourse upon it behaved himself so peremptorily and insolently before the King, that his Majesty thought it very necessary to commit him, nor did any one Counsellor then present appear to think otherwise: And I do confess, that the discharging him from his Imprisonment was some times afterwards moved, and that I was always against his Discharge; being of Opinion that it was impossible for the Lord *Willoughby*, or any other Governor in any of the Plantations, to preserve his Majesty's Right, and support the Government, if he should be so far discountenanced that a Man sent over by him as a Prisoner under such a particular and so heinous a Charge, should be upon his Appearance here set at Liberty; but my Opinion was, that he should be sent back a Prisoner thither, that he might be tried by the Law and Justice of the Island, and receive condign Punishment for his Offence. And I cannot deny, but that I am still of the same Opinion; and if it be an Error it proceeds from the Weakness of my Understanding, which is not in my Power to reform.

What I have here set down is all that occurs to my Memory with Reference to the Island of the *Barbadoes*; which being not particularly mentioned in the Article, but comprehended under the general Expression of his Majesty's foreign Plantations, I take my self obliged to give some Answer even to that General: And I hope it will not be imputed as Crime to me, if I have taken more Pains than other Men in that important Service of his Majesty concerning his foreign Plantations, which I did not think was enough taken to Heart; and if my Desire and Readiness to take any Pains, or give any Assistance to the Advancement of that Service, did induce many Persons to apply themselves to me on those Occasions, I hope it shall not be charged upon me as over Activity, or Ambition to ingross more Business in my Hands than I was intitled to; for which I have this Excuse to make for my self, that I found the Pains I took to be acceptable to his Majesty: And I was so far from having any particular Design or Advantage to my self, that I do profess and declare, that from all or any of his Majesty's foreign Plantations I never had the least Reward, or the least

least Present made to me, except that the now Lord *Willoughby* once told me, that his Brother had sent over some Pieces of the speckled Wood which grows in *Surinam*, with Direction, that if I liked it I might have what I would of it; whereupon I had some Pieces, which I thought might have been applied to the making of Cabinets or the adorning of Wainscot; but as they were very small, so the Middle of every Piece was wind-shaken and rotten, that they could not be applied to any considerable Use; and except some Blocks of Walnut-Tree which the Governour of *Virginia* sent to me, and of which I made some Table-Boards and Frames for Chairs, the Workmanship whereof cost me much more than the Wood was worth: and these two Particulars contain all the Rewards and Presents, or Profit, that ever I received from all his Majesty's foreign Plantations, or any Body to my Use.

THE Tenth Article is, *That I did reject and frustrate a Proposal and Undertaking approved by his Majesty, for the Preservation of Nevis and St. Christophers, and reducing the French Plantations to his Majesty's Obedience, after the Commissions were drawn for that Purpose, which was the Occasion of so great Loss and Damage in those Parts.*

I never did reject or frustrate any such Proposal or Undertaking, never taking upon me in the least Degree to make a Judgment of Things of that Nature, nor was ever any such Proposal made to me; but I do very well remember, that his Majesty himself did once deliver to the Council a Paper, which he said one of his Servants, Mr. *Marsh*, had delivered to him, containing some Propositions for Ships and Men to be sent by his Majesty for the Recovery of *St. Christophers*, which had been newly taken by the *French*. Upon the reading of which Paper and Propositions, the same were referred to the Consideration of the Lord-General, one of the Secretaries of State, and to the Vice-Chamberlain, as I remember, who were to confer with Mr. *Marsh*, and such others as joined with him; and they were at the same Time appointed to consider of another Proposition delivered in Writing by the now Lord *Willoughby* and some Merchants of *London*, who were Planters in the *Barbadoes*, for the supplying and better securing that Island, and the rest of those *Caribee* Islands; and for the reducing and recovering any of them which were or should be taken by the Enemy; upon the latter of which somewhat was afterwards done: and if the other concerning *Nevis* and *St. Christophers* was rejected, of which I know nothing, I presume it was, because it either appeared unpracticable, or not consistent with his Majesty's other Affairs.

THE Eleventh Article is, *That I advised and effected the Sale of Dunkirk to the French King, being Part of his Majesty's Dominions, together with the Ammunition, Artillery, and all sorts of Stores there, and for no greater Value than the said Ammunition, Artillery, and Stores were worth.*

It is very well known to his Majesty, and to several Persons yet alive, that the parting with *Dunkirk* was resolved upon before ever I heard of it; and that the Purpose was therefore concealed from me, because it was believed that I was not of that Opinion, and that I would not concur in the Advice. When it was afterwards proposed and debated, when I was present, there likewise attending upon his Majesty and his Royal Highness, the late Lord-Treasurer, Two Secretaries of State, and some other of the Lords of the Council; the Reasons that were given for the parting

with it were, *First*, That the Profit which did or could accrue to the Kingdom by keeping it, was very inconsiderable, whether in War or Peace; that by Sea it was very little useful, it being no Harbour, nor having Place for our Ships to ride safe in; and that if it were in the Hand of the Enemy, it could do us little Prejudice, because three or four Ships might block it up, and keep it from infesting their Neighbours; and that though heretofore it had been a Place of Licence at Sea, and had much obstructed Trade by their Men of War, yet that that proceeded only from the Unskilfulness of that Time, in applying proper Remedies to it; which was manifest by *Cromwell's* blocking them up, and restraining them when he made War upon them, insomuch as all the Men of War left that Place, and betook themselves to other Harbours; that it was so weak to the Land (notwithstanding the great Charge his Majesty had been at in the Fortifications, which were not yet finished) by the Situation and the Soil, that it required as many Men within to defend it, as the Army should consist of that besieged it; otherwise, that it could never hold out and endure a Siege of Two Months, as appeared clearly by its having been taken and retaken so many Times within the late Years; in all which Times it never held out so long, though there was always an Army at no great Distance to relieve it. *Secondly*, That the Charge of keeping and maintaining it, without any Accidents from the Attempt of an Enemy, did amount unto above One Hundred and Twenty Thousand Pounds a Year; which was a Sum the Revenue of the Crown could not support, without leaving many other Particulars of much more Importance unprovided for; and this was not lightly urged, but the State of the Revenue, and the constant and indispensable Issues were at the same Time presented. *Thirdly*, It could not reasonably be believed, but that if *Dunkirk* were kept, his Majesty would be shortly involved in a War with one of the two Crowns: The *Spanish* Ambassador had already demanded the Restitution of it in Point of Justice, it having been taken from his Master by the late Usurper, in a Time when there was not only a Peace between his Majesty and the King of *Spain*, but when his Majesty resided and was entertained by the Catholick King in *Flanders*; and at the same Time, both *France* and *Spain* inhibited their Subjects from paying those small Contributions to the Garrison at *Dunkirk*, and endeavoured to restrain the Governor himself from enjoying some Privileges which had been always enjoyed by him, from the Time that it was put into *Cromwell's* Hands; and it was then conceived, that as it would be very hard for the King to preserve a Neutrality towards both Crowns, even during the Time of the War between them, (which Temper was thought very necessary for his Majesty's Affairs,) so it would be much more difficult long to avoid a War with one of them upon the keeping of *Dunkirk*, if the Peace that was newly made should remain firm and unshaken. Upon these Reasons, (the major Part whereof were out of my Sphere, and I could only govern my self by the Opinion of those who understood Matters of that Nature, nor could I answer any of the Arguments which have been offered,) his Majesty resolved to ease himself of the Burthen of maintaining *Dunkirk*, and to part with it in such a manner as might be most for his Advantage and Benefit. There remained then no other Question, than into what Hand to put it; and the Measure of that was only who would give most Money for it, there being then no Inclination to prefer one before another. It was enough understood that both Crowns would be very glad to have it, and would probably both make large Offers for it; but it was then as evident, that
whatsoever

whatsoever *France* should contract for, the King might be sure to receive; and the Business would be soon dispatched; whereas, on the other hand, it was as notorious, and as evident to his Majesty, and to all who had any Knowledge of the Court of *Spain*, and of the Scarcity of Money there and in *Flanders*, that how large Offers so ever the *Spaniard* might make, they could not be able in any Time to pay any considerable Sum of Money; and that there would be so much Time spent in Consults between *Madrid* and *Brussels* before it could be dispatched, that the keeping it so long in his Majesty's Hands, would be an intolerable Burthen to him; besides that, it seemed then probable that the *Spaniard* would shortly declare himself an Enemy, for besides that he demanded *Dunkirk* as of right, so he likewise required the Restitution of *Tangier* and *Jamaica* upon the same Reason, and declared that without it there could be no lasting Peace between *England* and *Spain*, and refused so much as to enter upon a Treaty of Alliance with the King, before he would promise to make such a Restitution. There wanted not in this Conference and Debate, the Consideration of the States of the *United Provinces*, as Persons like enough to desire the Possession of *Dunkirk*, from whence they had formerly received so much Damage, and were like enough to receive more whenever they should be engaged in any War; and if in Truth they had any such Desire, more Money might reasonably be required of them, and probably be obtained, than could be expected from either of the Kings. But upon Discussion of that Point, it did appear to every Man's Reason very manifest, that though they had rather that *Dunkirk* should be put into the Hand of the *Spaniard* than delivered to *France*, or than it should be detained by the *English*, yet they durst not receive it into their own Possession, which neither of the Kings would have approved of, and so it would have exposed them to the Displeasure if not to the Hostility of both Crowns. Upon this full Deliberation, his Majesty inclined rather to give it up to *France* than to *Spain*; but deferred any positive Resolution till he had imparted the Matter to the Council-Board, where the Debate was again resumed, principally concerning the keeping or the parting with it; in which Debate the Memory and Mention of what hath been done in the *House of Commons* heretofore upon that Subject was not omitted, nor the Bill that they had sent up to the *House of Peers* for annexing it inseparably to the Crown; but after a long Debate of the whole Matter there was not, as I remember, above one Lord of the Council who offered his Advice to his Majesty against his parting with it; and the Ground of that Lord's dissenting was enough understood to have nothing of Publick in it. In conclusion, his Majesty resolved for the Reasons aforesaid to put it into the Hands of *France*, if that King would satisfy his Majesty's Expectation in the Money he would require for it.

Monfieur *D'Estrades* came privately over to treat upon it without any Character; but pretending to make it his Way for *Holland*, whither he was designed for Ambassador. After he had waited upon the King, his Majesty appointed Four or Five of the Lords of his Privy-Council (whereof I was required to be one) to treat with Monfieur *D'Estrades* upon the Sale of *Dunkirk*; and at that our first Conference together, after we had in vain endeavoured to perswade him to make some Offer, we did demand the Sum of Seven Hundred Thousand Pounds Sterling to be paid by the King of *France* for the Delivery of *Dunkirk* and *Mardyke* (which is always understood to be included when *Dunkirk* is mentioned) into his Possession. Which Sum appeared to him so stupendous, that he seemed to think the

Treaty

Treaty at an end, and resolved not to make any Offer at all on the Part of the King of *France*; and so the Conference broke up. At the next Meeting he offered Three Millions of Livres, which, according to the common Account, amounted to Three Hundred Thousand Pistoles; which we as much undervalued: So that any further Conference was discontinued till he had sent an Express or two into *France*, and till their Return; and afterwards, upon our insisting upon what he thought too much, and his Offer of what we esteemed too little, the Treaty seemed to be at an end, and he preparing for his Return. In Conclusion, his Majesty being fully as desirous to part with it, as the King of *France* could be to have it, it was agreed and concluded, that upon the Payment of Five Hundred Thousand Pistoles in Specie at *Calais* to such Persons as the King should appoint to receive it, his Majesty's Garrison of *Dunkirk* should be withdrawn, and that Place put into the Hands of the King of *France*: All which was executed accordingly; and I believe was a greater Sum of Money than was ever paid at one Payment by any Prince in *Christendom*, upon what Occasion soever. And that all this should not amount to a greater Value than the Ammunition, Artillery, and Stores were worth, which were delivered with it, is very strange, and cannot be supposed by any reasonable Computation. I do very well remember, that in the Treaty, we did with much Earnestness and Resolution insist upon the detaining and transporting into *England* the Cannon and other Artillery and Ammunition; but Monsieur *D'Estrades* would not consent to it, it being, as he said, necessary for the Defence of the Place, which probably might be attacked by the *Spaniard* within few Days after it should be delivered into the Hands of the *French*; and upon our inserting that Exception of the Cannon and Ammunition in our Demand, he was at last induced to consent to the Payment of Five Hundred Thousand Pistoles, which he had never before yielded unto; and when his Majesty plainly discerned that the King of *France* would in Truth give no more, and had caused some Estimate to be made of the Cannon and Ammunition, the Value whereof, as I remember, was not thought to arise to more than Twenty Thousand Pounds Sterling, or thereabouts, his Majesty resolved to accept what was offered, for which I have not heard that he hath ever since been sorry; and his Majesty did at the same Time resolve, and positively declare, that all the Money which should be received for *Dunkirk* should be brought to and deposited in the Tower of *London*, and no Part of it applied to any ordinary Occasions, but to be preserved for some pressing Accident, as, an Insurrection, or the like, which was reasonably enough apprehended; and I presume it was all issued out in such a manner, and at such Seasons, as his Majesty found necessary for his most important Affairs; of the Particulars whereof I can say nothing. This is all I can say concerning the Sale of *Dunkirk*, and of my Part in that Transaction: To which I shall only add, that I acted that Part in it which I was obliged by my Duty to do, in Obedience to the King's Commands; and that before, or in, or after the Transaction, I never received the Value of one Shilling for Reward, or Present, or any other Consideration relating to that Affair; and I believe the Treatment I have received since my coming into *France*, is an unquestionable Evidence that that King did never take himself to be beholden to me for that, or any other Service, as in Truth he never was.

THE Twelfth Article is, *That I did unduly cause his Majesty's Letters Patents under the Great Seal of England, (to one Dr. Crowther) to be altered, and the Inrollment thereof to be unduly razed.*

When I first heard of this Charge, I could not comprehend what the meaning of it was, being most assured that I had never caused any Alteration to be made in any of his Majesty's Letters Patents under the Great Seal, or the Inrollment thereof to be razed; but upon Enquiry I was informed, that Dr. Crowther, who was Chaplain to his Royal Highness the Duke of York, and had attended upon his Person during the whole Time that his Highness was beyond the Seas, upon his Majesty's Return into England, had obtained from the King his Royal Presentation to the Parsonage of *Treddington* in the County of *Worcester*; which Presentation, according to course, passed under the Great Seal of *England*; that when he brought his Action upon the Presentation against the Intruder, who refused to give him Possession, and the Record was carried down to the Assizes in the Country, when the Doctor's Council was to open his Title, and thereupon was to produce the King's Presentation, they found upon perusal thereof, that either by Misinformation or Negligence of the Clerk, instead of the County of *Worcester*, where the Rectory was, the County of *Warwick* was inserted; upon which Mistake the Doctor was necessitated to be Nonsuited: and thereupon he forthwith made a Journey to *London*, to advise with his Council, and the most experienced Clerks, how to recover the Misfortune that had befallen him, and that his Majesty's Right might not be destroyed by such an Oversight in the Clerk; and it seems he was by them advised, as the usual way in Cases of that Nature, to Petition the King, that, in his Majesty's Presence, the Presentation might be mended, and *Worcester* inserted instead of *Warwick*, and that thereupon the Great Seal might be again affixed to it; all which was done accordingly, as in such Cases is usual. And this is all I know of that Affair.

THE Thirteenth Article is, *That I have in an arbitrary Way examined and drawn into Question divers of his Majesty's Subjects concerning their Lands, Tenements, Goods and Chattels, and Properties; determined thereof at the Council-Table, and stopped Proceedings at Law, and threatened some that pleaded the Statute of 17 Car. I.*

I must here again lament my own Misfortune, that I am exposed to publick Reproach under a general odious Charge, without inserting any one Particular to which I might make my Defence: I have therefore no more to say, but that I am very innocent as to any Crime laid to my Charge in this Article; and I have been so far from examining and drawing into Question any of his Majesty's Subjects concerning their Lands, Tenements, Goods and Chattels and Properties, and determining the same at the Council-Table, and stopping Proceedings at Law, that I do not know or believe that any one Case of that Nature hath been ever determined there, at least when I have been present; I having always discountenanced all such Addresses, and procured all Petitions of that kind to be rejected as often as they have been tendered; and I take my self obliged to say for the Vindication of his Majesty's Honour and Justice, that there have not been so many Years pass'd since the Erection of the Council-Table, with so little Disturbance or Disquiet to the Subjects concerning their Lands, Tenements, Goods and Chattels and Properties, as hath been since his Majesty's happy Return, nor hath the ordinary Course of Proceeding at Law been less obstructed.

THE Fourteenth Article is, *That I did cause Quo Warranto's to be issued out against most of the Corporations of England by Act of Parliament, to the intent I might receive great Sums of Money from them for renewing their Charters; which when they complied withal, I caused the said Quo Warranto's to be discharged, and Prosecution thereon to cease.*

I never caused any *Quo Warranto* to issue out against any one Corporation in *England*, but by his Majesty's express Command, or by Order of the Board; which was always upon some Miscarriage or Misbehaviour in the Corporation: And I do not remember that I ever moved the King against any particular Corporation, but that of *Woodstock*; and which my Duty to his Majesty obliged me to do, being intrusted by his Majesty with the Command of his House and Parks there, and being his Majesty's Steward of his Honour and Manor of *Woodstock*, upon which the Borough had always depended. His Majesty having conferred that Charge upon me, I was no sooner possessed of it by the Death of the late Earl of *Lindsey*, who enjoyed that Place before, than I received a Petition from several Inhabitants and Burgeses of the Borough of *Woodstock*, who complained that the Mayor and Justices had lately procured their Charter to be renewed, without the Privy or Consent of the Borough; and that under Pretence of renewing it, they had procured many new Clauses to be inserted, and thereby reduced much of the Government, which before depended upon the whole Corporation, into their own Hands; and had thereby likewise procured a Piece of Ground, the Benefit whereof did formerly belong to all the Burgeses, and was usually applied to the Relief of such of them who were decayed in their Estates, to be now granted to the Mayor and a select Number of the Justices, and the Profits thereof to be at their Disposal, to the great Prejudice of the Borough and the Inhabitants thereof. I referred this Petition to Mr. Justice *Morton*, who lived within Four or Five Miles of *Woodstock*, and desired him to examine the Truth of those Allegations, and to certify me whether the Complaints were just and reasonable: Whereupon he took the Pains to go over to the Town, and confer with the Mayor and Justices, and heard the Allegations of the Petitioners; and upon the whole Matter certified me, that he found several important Alterations in the new Charter from what had been in the old, and some new Concessions; and at the same time Sir *William Fleetwood*, who is Ranger of the Parks, certified me, that since the renewing of their Charter the Mayor and Justices were not so good Neighbours to his Majesty's Game as they had formerly been, and had withdrawn many of those Services which they had used to perform; and that when any Trespases were committed by those of the Borough upon his Majesty's Woods or Game, which happened very frequently, and Complaint was thereof made to the Mayor and Justices, who had the sole Jurisdiction within the Borough, there was so slight and perfunctory Examination thereof, that the Prosecutors were wearied out, and no Justice could be obtained. It was my Duty to inform his Majesty of these Proceedings, who was much offended thereat, and thereupon gave Direction to his Attorney-General to bring a *Quo Warranto*, and to repeal that Charter which had been so unduly procured, and in which his Majesty had been so grossly deceived and abused; and I believe there was the less Vigour used in the Prosecution of that *Quo Warranto*, because the Mayor and Justices for some Time pretended that they would surrender the said Charter, and receive a new one in such manner as his Majesty thought fit, though they afterwards changed their Mind. And this is the
only

only Charter which I gave Direction for the Prosecution of, to the best of my Memory: Nor did I ever give Direction upon the Receipt of any Money, to discharge any *Quo Warranto's*, or cause the Prosecution thereupon to cease; nor did I ever receive the least Sum of Money for the granting or renewing any Charter, other than the usual Fees received for the same by the Clerk of the Hannaper, and accompted to the Great Seal; which Fee, as I remember, amounts to Thirteen Shillings and Four Pence, or thereabouts.

THE Fifteenth Article is, *That I procured the Bills of Settlement for Ireland, and received great Sums of Money for the same in a most corrupt and unlawful manner.*

I do confess, if I have received the least Sum of Money for or upon the passing any Bills for the Settlement of *Ireland*, I have done the same in a most corrupt and unlawful manner; nor indeed have I been more solicitous in procuring any of the said Bills to pass, or been more concerned in or for the passing them (except for his Majesty's Service and the Publick Peace) than any other Councillor present at those Debates hath been; but because this Aspersions upon my Honour and my Honesty hath been by so much Industry contrived by some Men, who very well know my Innocence in that Particular, and may yet have gained Credit with many upon the Confidence of bold Reporters; I do not know a better way for my own intire Vindication, than to set down an intire Relation of all that hath passed by my Hand, or with my Privy, with reference to *Ireland*, since the Time of his Majesty's happy Return into *England*. When his Majesty found, at his coming to *Whitehall*, several Persons of Honour and Quality deputed from *Ireland* to tender the humble Duty, Obedience, and Submission of that Kingdom to his Majesty's Government and Subjection; the present Government of *Ireland* at that Time being executed in a Military way, by those who had the Command of that Part of the Army, which, upon the Revolution in *England*, had declared their Purpose and Resolution to return to his Majesty's Obedience; and there could not be too much Expedition used in settling it under those Laws, and that Form of Government it had been formerly accustomed to. Every body remembers the Multiplicity of Business the King was incumbent to at that Time, being to reduce his Three Kingdoms to that old Order and Form of Government which they might in Justice require, and which for so many Years had, by the Confusion of the late Civil War, been discontinued; and therefore it will not be much wondered at, that the Settlement of *Ireland* did not proceed with that Expedition as the distracted Interests of that Kingdom did require.

Within few Days after the King's Arrival at *Whitehall*, the Commissioners or Deputies from *Ireland* (for I know not under what other Name or Title to mention them) taking Notice of the Trust the King then reposed in me (a greater Trust, God and the King well know, than I was in any degree ambitious of) addressed themselves to me, desiring that I would receive from them an Information of the present State and Condition of that Kingdom; which his Majesty had likewise commanded them to impart to me; and that I would assist them in procuring his Majesty's Favour, that as little Time might be lost, as was possible, in endeavouring to settle and dispose the distracted Condition of that Kingdom: And upon Conference with them, I quickly found that it was in a distracted Condition indeed; so hopelessly distracted, that I could not comprehend any practicable

ble Way to compose it. There had been an Act of Parliament made in the Beginning of the Rebellion for the Encouragement of Adventurers; that was, to encourage all Persons to bring in Money for the carrying on the War, upon the Assurance of having a Recompence for their Money out of the forfeited Lands of those who were or should be in Rebellion, according to an Estimate of the Values by the said Act of Parliament; in which, for their better Security, there was likewise a Clause, that his Majesty should not grant a Pardon to any of those Rebels: And upon this Invitation many honourable Persons, and others, had brought in great Sums of Money for the carrying on that War, upon the Security aforesaid. But the Rebellion shortly breaking out in *England*, the Persons in Power in both Houses quickly violated that whole Act, by taking the Monies raised, and lent for the Service of *Ireland*, without and contrary to the Consent of those who lent it, and applying it for the Support of the Rebellion in *England*; and employed those Regiments of Horse and Foot who were levied for *Ireland*, to serve against the King under the Command of my Lord of *Essex*, and who did serve under his Command at the Battle of *Edge-Hill*; where some of them, out of the Detestation of being so betrayed into Rebellion, quitted my Lord *Essex* his Army, and went over to the King. The Service of *Ireland* being thus neglected, and to such a Degree that the Rebels there increased in Number and in Strength, many Persons of Honour in that Nation who had contained themselves within their Obedience, and were in no Degree privy to the first Insurrection and breaking out into Rebellion, found it now necessary for their own Preservation, to secure themselves in those Towns and Places which were possessed by the Rebels, and so joined with them in their Counsels; yet making all the Professions of Duty to the King, and of an impatient Desire to return to their Subjection; which many of them made good afterwards upon the first Opportunity. By this means the Rebels in *Ireland* advanced every Day in Power, and had several Armies in the several Provinces of the Kingdom, much superior in Power to the *English* Forces, whilst they were every Day diminished by their want of Victuals, want of Clothes, and want of Pay, which the Parliament neglected to supply them with, and the King could not. His late Majesty, after above a Year's Time that the Rebellion in *England* had been prosecuted against him, notwithstanding all Overtures of Accommodation, found it necessary to make a Cessation in *Ireland*; which was after some Years transacted into a Peace, which though it was quickly afterwards most wickedly and perfidiously broken by the *Irish* to their own Destruction, yet many principal Persons of Honour and good Fortune adhered afterwards constantly to the King, without ever swerving from their Allegiance; and such Men believed the full Benefit of that Peace, in being restored to their Estates which did in Justice belong to them, and expected the same accordingly.

After the Murder of his late Majesty, the King that now is receiving an Address from his *Roman Catholick* Subjects in *Ireland*, with great Acknowledgments of their past Crimes and Errors, and of ample Professions of their Duty and Obedience for the Time to come, during the Time of his being in *France*, I sent the Lord Marquis of *Ormond* into *Ireland* as his Lieutenant of that Kingdom, and with Authority to make such Concessions to his *Roman Catholick* Subjects as might unite them to his Obedience; and that thereby such an Union might likewise be made between his *English* and *Irish* Subjects (the Lord *Inchiquin* having reduced the whole Province of *Munster*, and the Army, and Garrisons thereof, to
make

make Profession of Fidelity to their King) that *Dublin* might quickly be recovered, which was the only considerable Place that then continued in Rebellion, and in which there were very many of known Affections to the King; who would quickly have rendred that City to the Lord Lieutenant, if a great Supply from the Parliament, immediately after the Murder of the late King; had not unhappily arrived the very Day or Two before the Marquis of *Ormond* marched with his Army to recover *Dublin*; and within very few Weeks after, *Cromwell* himself landed there with a great Army of Horse and Foot, and all Provisions necessary for the Support and Maintenance of it.

It is not necessary in this Place, and upon this Occasion, to mention what befel that unhappy Kingdom after *Cromwell's* Arrival there; the quick and speedy Reduction of Towns and Garrisons, the dissolving and dismissing of the Troops and Army under the Command of the Lord Lieutenant, and he being forced to withdraw himself out of the Kingdom and to return into *France*; which, although it proceeded from the miserable and foolish Jealousies of the *Irish*, and then from their Treachery and Perfidiousness, yet those Crimes did not cover the whole Nation, yet there remained still very many Persons of Honour and Quality, who never after were faulty to his Majesty, and therefore expected the Benefit of the last Peace, likewise confirmed by his Majesty that now is, as of Justice belonging to them; and many of this Condition (some whereof had never been in Arms against the Crown, but had faithfully served in his Majesty's Army in *England* during the whole Rebellion) transported themselves to his Majesty beyond the Seas, and many others were taken and put to Death in *Ireland*.

After all Opposition to the Parliament was totally suppressed in *Ireland*, and the Kingdom intirely at their Devotion, they began then to think of executing the Act of Parliament of the Seventeenth Year of the late King, for Satisfaction of the Adventurers: But as they had from the Beginning violated that Act, by the misapplying the Men and the Money, as aforesaid; so they now preferred the gratifying and rewarding, and paying the Arrears due to the Officers and Soldiers, by assigning them liberal Proportions of the Lands which they called forfeited, before they did any thing for Satisfaction of the Adventurers, except such only who for some other Merit or Interest had a Title to their Favour; and amongst the forfeited Lands they reckoned all that which belonged to the Church, to the Marquis of *Ormond*, the Lord *Inchiquin*, and all those who had adhered to the King, and constantly opposed the Rebels there, as Part, and distributed the same accordingly. So that at this Time, when the Commissioners for that Kingdom attended his Majesty, the Officers and Soldiers of the Army, and some Adventurers, were and had been in quiet Possession for many Years of all the Church-Lands, of all the Marquis of *Ormond's* Lands, and the Lands of all other his Majesty's faithful Friends and Servants; and yet there remained a general Complaint amongst the Adventurers, that they were in no degree satisfied what was due to them upon their Adventures by the Act of Parliament, and desired the King that they might receive what was their Due.

Cromwell had not exercised such a Severity as to eradicate the whole *Irish* Nation; but had transplanted them with so great Rigour out of the other Provinces into the Province of *Conought*, that there was scarce left one *Irish* Family out of *Conought*; where the Usurper had assigned them severally such Proportions as he thought Recompence enough for the small Posses-

fions he had formerly allowed them out of their own Estates, in those Places where their Fortunes had lain: And to this Transplantation they had been forced to give their Consent, having had nothing in their Election but either to accept these Assignations, or to have nothing to live upon in any other Place. But now upon his Majesty's Return, as well those Men who had been transplanted thither out of other Provinces, as those upon whose Lands the other were transplanted as forfeited to the State, were now Suitors to the King, that every one might be restored to his own; and that their past Crimes might be expiated by the extreme Sufferings they had sustained for many Years; and that those Men who had been as deep in Rebellion as themselves, and continued much longer, and prospered better in it, might not be gratified and rewarded with their Estates and Fortunes.

Many Persons of Honour and Reputation, as is said before, had repaired to the King whilst he was beyond the Seas, and followed and attended him there; many Regiments had been raised and transported with the Consent and Approbation of *Cromwell*, for the Service of the Two Crowns of *France* and *Spain*; and many of those Officers had served his Majesty from the Beginning, and had never been in Rebellion, and upon his Majesty's Command, when he was in *Flanders*, brought their Regiments over thither to serve as he should direct: And as the King had kept Intelligence always with many of his well-affected Subjects in *England*, and in *Scotland*, so he had likewise done with some in *Ireland*, to the End that they might be ready to make use of the first Opportunity that should be offered, by any Divisions in the Army, or other Conjunctions, to join with those who were most forward to advance the King's Restitution; which many considerable Men there had promised to do, and in such Seasons could have rendered themselves very useful; and all these Men had some Pretence to the King's Favour, and an Expectation to be restored at least to some Part of their Estates.

This was the perplexed Estate of that Kingdom when the King returned into *England*, and when these Commissioners attended upon his Majesty and conferred with me; when I protested to them that there were so many Intricacies in the Business, and the whole Kingdom involved in so many contradictory Titles and Interests, that I knew not what Counsel to give, or what to propose; but that I would in publick Council give the best Advice and Assistance I could for the settling that Kingdom, when they should make any such Propositions to his Majesty as were practicable. That which was first to be done, and which could only make all other Expedients to be practicable, was the settling the Government in such a Form, and by such Rules, as the Kingdom had been accustomed to before the Troubles; and that the Course and Courts of Justice might be opened. Then the Commissioners themselves proposed, as the first Work incumbent upon his Majesty, in Piety, Honour and Justice, that all such to whom the Lands of the Church, the Lands of the Marquis of *Ormond*, and of all his Majesty's Friends who had been faithful to him, should be forthwith removed, that the right Owners might immediately be put in Possession of what in Right belonged to them; which was the more easily to be done, because much of those Lands remained undisposed of, and reserved for *Cromwell* himself, and much of the rest had been assigned to those Officers who had been the King's Murderers; and so those Lands were free from all other Title or Pretence, but what the King himself could make to them. But then there was some Caution, and Order to be observed; first,

to assign other Recompence to such who were possessed (how erroneously soever) of any Lands, either as Adventurers upon the Statute, or as Soldiers, for the just Arrears of their Pay; and his Majesty had declared before his coming into *England*, that there should be Satisfaction given to all such Persons; and the Truth is, the whole Kingdom of *Ireland* was at that Time so much possessed by the Adventurers and Soldiers, that it was thought very necessary in Point of Prudence to remove none out of Possession of what had been formerly assigned to them, and according to the Rules of that Time, until some other Lands were assigned to them; which was not difficult to be done. Then the Commissioners, discerning how much his Majesty was concerned for many of those who had served him beyond the Seas, and for others who claimed the Benefit of the first and second Treaty, undertook that his Majesty should not be pressed in any of those Particulars, but that all such Persons should be preserved, and their Estates secured; and thereupon a Preamble was prepared, containing those Provisions which was approved by the Commissioners, who undertook to have such a Bill transmitted as might be the Foundation for a good Settlement, and in which his Majesty might make such Alterations as he did think fit.

There were more Difficulties appeared in settling the Government than were at first apprehended; and nothing was so necessary as sending over the King's Commission, which might determine all other Authorities of Committees and Officers, in which Men had been invested by a Common Consent, or rather by the Prevalence of a Party, which already grew into Factions and Contestations. The General, who had contributed so much to the King's Restoration, and appeared very zealous for the Advancement of his Service, had been by the Parliament and Counsel of State (as they called them) declared and created General of all the Forces in the Three Kingdoms; and so his Orders had been obeyed, as well in *Scotland* and *Ireland*, as in *England*, before his Majesty's Return; and the King did not think fit in any degree to lessen his Trust and Authority, nor had the General any Inclination to part with his Power in *Ireland*, where he had procured a great Estate and could best secure it under his own Authority; and yet he resolved not to go thither, and indeed his Presence then about the King was thought very necessary. Hereupon the King declared that he would make the Lord *Robarts* Deputy of *Ireland*; who was willing to receive that Charge, knowing at the same Time that the Duke of *Albemarle* was to continue Lieutenant of that Kingdom. But there quickly arose such Differences between the General and the Lord *Robarts* about the drawing their Commissions, the latter being so scrupulous and nice in having the least Dependence upon the General, though Lord Lieutenant; and his Pride and Morosity was such towards the Commissioners of *Ireland*, that they withdrew themselves from giving him further Attendance and Information; so that his Majesty quickly discerned, that though he was a Man of great Parts and Knowledge, yet his Nature and Temper was not fit for that Employment, and therefore resolved for the present to put the Government into the Hands of Three Lords Justices, the Lord Chancellor of that Kingdom, the Earl of *Montroth*, and the Earl of *Orrery*, who might begin to reduce the Government into some Order, until his Majesty could take a further Resolution for the Establishment of it.

As soon as a Bill was transmitted, according to the usual Course, to his Majesty, for the Settlement of *Ireland*, with such a Preamble as is before mentioned, though the Body of the Bill did not in Truth correspond with it;

it; his Majesty gave Direction that it should be shewed and exposed to those of the several Interests, even to the *Irish* themselves, who were the most like to receive Prejudice from it: And after a sufficient Time allowed for every Man's Consideration, his Majesty appointed a Time to have it read at the Board, and to hear what Objections could be made against it. The great Debate then was upon the Pretences of the *Irish*, who appeared with marvellous Confidence, and complained, that by that Act then prepared, and under Consideration, the whole *Irish* Nation would be extirpated, all their Estates being thereby taken from them. As the present Government in *Ireland*, which had declared for the King, had sent over Commissioners or Deputies to attend his Majesty, and know his Pleasure, as is mentioned before; so the Body of Adventurers had likewise chosen some Persons to present their Grievances and Desires: and the *Irish*, under the Names of the *Roman Catholics* of *Ireland*, had likewise chosen others to appear on their behalf, whereof some were Lawyers and Men of good Parts, who well knew all the Transactions in *Ireland* from the Beginning of the Rebellion, throughout all the Changes of Government: The chiefest Arguments they urged for themselves were, *First*, their long and great Sufferings; the Loss of their Estates for Five or Six and Twenty Years; the wasting and spending of the whole Nation in Battles, and in Transportation of Men into the Parts beyond the Seas; whither, as I remember, they reckoned above Twenty Thousand Men to be transported out of that Kingdom in Four or Five Years; the great Numbers which had been executed and massacred after his Majesty's Government had been forced from thence; the great Numbers which had perished by Famine and the Plague; those two great Judgments having raged over the Kingdom for two or three Years; and at last the transplanting the small Remainder of the Nation into one Corner of the Province of *Conought*, where yet much of the Land was taken from them, which had been assigned to them with all those Formalities of Law which were practis'd under that Government. *Secondly*, They demanded the Benefit of the two Treaties of Peace; the one in the late King's Time, and the other confirmed by his Majesty that now is; by both which they stand indemnified for all Acts done by them in the Rebellion; and insisted upon their Innocence since that Time, and that they had pursued all Ways that were in their Power to manifest their Affection to his Majesty, and so entire an Obedience to his Commands whilst he was beyond the Seas, that they betook themselves to, and withdrew themselves from, the Service of *France* or *Spain*, in such manner as his Majesty signified was his Pleasure they should do. *Thirdly*, They urged, and forced with a little more Liberty and Indiscretion than became them in that Conjunction, the Unworthiness and Incapacity of those who for so many Years had possess'd themselves of their Estates, and sought now a Confirmation of their Rebellious Title from his Majesty: That their Rebellion had been more infamous, and of a greater Magnitude than that of the *Irish*; who had risen in Arms to free themselves from the Rigour and Severity that was exercised upon them by some of the King's Ministers, and for the Liberty of their Conscience and Practice of their Religion, without having the least Intention or Thought of withdrawing themselves from his Majesty's Obedience, or declining his Majesty's Government: whereas, the others had carried on an odious Rebellion against his Majesty's Sacred Person, whom they had horridly murdered in the Sight of the Sun, with all imaginable Circumstances of Contempt and Defiance, and as much as in them lay had rooted

out

out Monarchy itself, and overturned and destroyed the whole Government of Church and State; and therefore that whatever Punishment the poor *Irish* had deserved for their former Transgressions, which they had so long since repented of, and departed from the Rebellion when they had Armies and strong Towns in their Hands, and put themselves again under his Majesty's Protection; this Part of the *English*, who were possessed of their Estates, had broken all their Obligations to God and the King, and so could not merit to be gratified with their Ruin and total Destruction: That it was too evident and notorious to the World, that his Majesty's Three Kingdoms had been very faulty to him, and withdrawn themselves from his Government, by which he had been compelled to live in Exile so many Years; and yet, that upon their return to their Duty and Obedience, his Majesty had been graciously pleased to grant a free and general Pardon and Act of Indemnity, in which many were comprehended who had in truth been the Contrivers and Fomenters of all the Misery and Desolation which had involved the Three Nations for so many Years; and therefore they hoped, that when all his Majesty's other Subjects (as criminal at least as the others) were, by his Majesty's Clemency, restored to their own Estates which they had forfeited, were in full Peace and Mirth and Joy, the poor *Irish* alone should not be totally exempt from all his Majesty's Grace, and left in Tears and Mourning and Lamentation, and be sacrificed without Redemption to the Avarice and Cruelty of those, who had not only spoiled and oppress'd them, but had done all that was in their Power, and with all the Insolency imaginable, to destroy his Majesty himself and his Posterity, and who now return to their Obedience, and submitted to his Government, when they were no longer able to oppose it; nor did they yet return to it with that Joy and Alacrity and Resignation as the *Irish* did, and desired to do: And so concluded with those pathetic Applications and Appeals to his Majesty, as Men well versed in Discourses of that Nature are accustomed to do.

This Discourse carried on, and urged with more Passion, Vehemence and Indiscretion, than was suitable to the Condition they were in; and in which, and the Excesses of their Rhetorick, they had let fall many Expressions very indecent and unwarrantable, and in some of them confidently excused, if not justified their first Entrance into Rebellion, (the most barbarous certainly and unexcusable, that any Christians have been engaged in in any Age) they irreconciled themselves to many who had Compassion enough for them; and gave their immediate Adversaries (who stood upon the advantage Ground) both Provocation and Opportunity to say many Things to their Reproach, which probably would else have been forborn. They enlarged upon all the odious Circumstances of the first Year's Rebellion, the Murthering of above a Hundred Thousand Persons in cold Blood, and with all the Barbarity imaginable; which Murthers and Barbarities had been always excepted from Pardon: And they told them, that if there were not some amongst themselves that then appeared, they were sure there would be many found amongst those for whom they appeared, who would be found guilty of those odious Crimes, which were excluded from any Benefit by those Treaties. And so that first Agitation before his Majesty vented itself in so much Bitterness and Animosity on both Sides, that his Majesty thought it best to conclude it with such Reprehensions and Animadversions, as might dispose them to a better Temper when they should be next admitted to his Majesty's Presence.

At their next Attendance upon his Majesty, which was within few Days after, the Commissioners for the Protestants, taking Notice of what the other Party had alledged for their Defence; the Pretence they had to the two Acts of Pacification; and their extolling their own Innocence from that Time; and their great Affection for his Majesty's Service; declared, that whatever legal Title the Adventurers had to the Lands they were in Possession of, many of whom had always faithfully served the King; yet they would be content, that all those who had in truth preserved their Integrity towards his Majesty from the Time of either or both the Pacifications, and not swerved afterwards from their Allegiance, should partake of his Majesty's Grace and Royal Bounty, in such a manner and to such a degree as his Majesty thought fit to exercise towards them: But they were confident they should make it appear, that their Pretences to that Grace and Favour were not founded upon any reasonable Title; that they had never consented to any one Act of Pacification, to which the Indemnity had been annexed, which they had not violated and broken within Ten Days after, and then returned to all their Acts of Disloyalty and Rebellion; that after the first Act of Pacification, ratified by the last King, in very few Days after, they treated the Herald, his Majesty's Officer, who came to proclaim that Peace, with all manner of Indignity, tearing his Coat of Arms (the King's Arms) from off his Back, and beat and wounded him so that he was hardly rescued from the Loss of his Life; that about the same time they endeavoured to surprise and murder the Lord-Lieutenant, and pursued him to *Dublin*, which they forthwith besieged with their Army, under the Command of that General who had signed the Peace; they imprisoned their Commissioners who were authoriz'd by them, for consenting to those Articles which themselves had confirm'd, and so prosecuted the War with as much Asperity as ever; and refused to give that Aid and Assistance they were obliged to, for the Recovery and Restoration of his late Majesty, who was then in Prison at the Isle of *Wight*; the Promise and Expectation of which Supply and Assistance, was the sole Ground and Consideration of that Treaty, and of the Concessions therein made to them; that they thereupon renounced their Obedience to his Majesty, and put themselves under the Protection and Disposal of *Rinuceni* the Pope's Nuncio, whom they made their Generalissimo of all their Armies, their Admiral at Sea, and to preside in all their Councils. After their Divisions amongst themselves, and the Burthen of the Tyranny they suffered under, had disposed them to petition this King, who was then in *France*, to receive them into his Protection, and to send the Marquis of *Ormond* over again into *Ireland* to command them; and his Majesty was so far prevailed with, as to send the Marquis of *Ormond* into *Munster*, with such a Supply of Arms and Ammunition as he could procure; where the Lord *Inchiquin*, Lord President of that Province, with the Protestant Army, received and joined with him; and shortly after, the Confederate *Irish* made that second Treaty of Pacification, of which they now likewise demanded the Benefit: But that it is notoriously known, that they no sooner made that Treaty than they broke it, in not bringing in those Supplies of Men and Money which they were obliged to do, and the want whereof exposed the Lord-Lieutenant to many Difficulties; and he had no sooner undergone the first Misfortune before *Dublin*, than they withdrew from taking any further Care of the Kingdom, raised Scandals upon and Jealousies of the whole Body of the *English*; who, being so provoked, would no longer venture themselves in any Action or Conjunction with the *Irish*. They caused

caused an Assembly or Convention of the Clergy to meet without the Lord-Lieutenant's Authority, and put the Government of all Things into their Hands; who, in a short time, improved the Jealousy in the Mind of the People towards the few Protestants who yet remained in the Army, and who had served the King with all imaginable Courage and Fidelity, from the very first Hour of the Rebellion in the Three Kingdoms, to that degree, that the Marquis was even compelled to discharge his own Troop of Guards of Horse, consisting of such Officers and Gentlemen as are mentioned before; and to trust himself and all the remaining Towns and Garrisons to the Fidelity of the *Irish*; protesting, that upon such a Confidence the whole Nation would be united as one Man to his Majesty's Service, under the Command of the said Marquis: But they had no sooner received Satisfaction in that Particular, (which was not in the Marquis's Power to refuse to give them) but that they raised several Calumnies against the Marquis himself, and declaimed against his Religion, and inhibited the People upon Pain of Excommunication, not to submit to this or that Order enjoined by the Marquis; and upon the Matter, inhibited any Obedience they paid to him: Instead of raising new Forces, those that were raised run from their Colours and dispersed themselves; they who were trusted with the keeping of Towns and Forts, either gave them up by Treachery to *Cromwell*, or lost them through Cowardice to him upon very feeble Attacks: Their Great General *Owen O Neile* had made a formal Contract and Stipulation with the Parliament; and in the End, when they had divested the Marquis of all Power to oppose the Enemy, and gave him great Cause to believe his Person to be in great Danger to be betray'd, and delivered up to the Enemy, they vouchsafed to petition him to depart out of the Kingdom, which they could easily compel him to do; and that he would leave his Majesty's Authority in the Hands of one of his Majesty's *Roman Catholick* Subjects, to whom they promised to submit with the most punctual Obedience. Whereupon the Marquis finding that he could not unite them in any one Action worthy of the Duty of good Subjects, or of prudent Men towards their own Preservation; and so, that his Residence amongst them longer could in no degree contribute to his Majesty's Service or Honour; and that they would make it be believed, that if he would have committed the Command into the Hands of a *Roman Catholick*, they would have been able to have preserved those Towns which still remained in their Possession, which were *Limerick* and *Galloway*, and some other Places of less Importance; and likewise by degrees recover from the Enemy what had been lost; which was very possible for them to have done, having great Bodies of Men to perform any Enterprize, and some good Officers to lead them, if they would have been obedient to any Command: Whereupon the Marquis had resolved to gratify them, in placing the Command in such a Person's Hand, whose Zeal for the Catholick Religion was unquestionable, and whose Fidelity to the King and entire Affection as unblemished; and so made Choice of the Marquis of *Clanrickard*, a Name, though of an *English* Extraction, had for so many Hundred Years resided in that Kingdom, and had the greatest Fortune amongst them, that he had the Reputation of being of the best Family of the *Irish*, and whose Family had, in all former Rebellions, as well as in this, preserved his Loyalty unspotted to the Crown. The *Roman Catholicks* of all kinds pretended at least a wonderful Joy at this Election, acknowledged it a great Obligation to the Lord-Lieutenant for making it, and applied themselves to the other with all Protestations of Duty and Submission, to induce him to accept the Charge,

Charge, who indeed knew them too well to be willing to trust them; yet upon the Marquis of *Ormond's* earnest, and solemn Intreaty, and out of his great Zeal for his Majesty's Service, and to support his Government there, until his Majesty could procure other Supplies, or give better Orders for the doing it, he was contented to receive such Commissions from the Lord-Lieutenant, as was necessary for the Execution of that Command, and Preservation of the Government. Upon which the Marquis of *Ormond* embarked himself, with some few Friends and Servants, upon a little *Pink* that was bound for *France*, where he arrived safely about the Time that his Majesty transported himself thither, after his miraculous Escape from *Worcester*.

The Lord-Lieutenant was no sooner gone, but that the Marquis of *Clanrickard*, the new Lord Deputy, found himself no better treated than the Lord of *Ormond* had done: That Part of the Clergy which had continually opposed the Lord Lieutenant for being a Protestant, were now as little satisfied with the Deputy's Religion, and as violently opposed all his Desires, and violated their own Promises, and quickly made it evident, that his Affection and Loyalty to the King was that which they disliked, and a Crime that could not be weighed down by the undoubted Sincerity of his Religion. They entered into secret Correspondence with the Enemy, and Conspiracies between themselves; and though there were some Persons of Honour and Quality with the Deputy, who were very faithful to him and to the King, yet there were so many about him of another Alay, that all his Councils, Resolutions, and Designs were soon enough discovered to the Enemy to be prevented; and though some of the Letters were intercepted, and the Persons discovered who gave the Intelligence, he had not Power enough to bring them to Justice; but being commonly Friars and Clergymen, the Privilege of the Church was presently insisted upon, and so they were rescued from the secular Prosecution till their Escape was contrived. That perfidious and treacherous Party had so great an Interest in all the Towns, Forts, and Garrisons, which yet pretended to be subject to the Deputy, that all his Orders were still contradicted or neglected; and the Enemy no sooner appeared before any Place, but some Faction in the Town caused it to be delivered up and rendered. Nor could this fatal Sottishness be reformed even by the Severity and Rigour which the *English* exercised upon them; who, by the wonderful Judgment of God Almighty, always executed those Men who put themselves and the Towns into their Hands, finding them to have had some barbarous Part in the foul Murders which had been committed in the Beginning of the Rebellion, and who had been, by all the Acts of Grace granted by the several Powers, still reserved for Justice: And of this kind there were so many Instances in and about *Limerick* and *Galloway*, that they deserved to be collected and mentioned in a Discourse by it self, to observe and magnify the wonderful Providence of God Almighty, in bringing heinous Crimes to Light and Punishment in this World, by Means unapprehended by the Guilty; inasmuch, as there was scarce a Person of the Clergy or Laity, who had had a single Hand in the contriving and fomenting the first Rebellion, and in the Perpetration of those horrible Murders, who had obstructed all Overtures towards Peace, and caused Peace to be broken as soon as made; who had adhered to the Nuncio, and endeavoured most maliciously to exclude the King and his Royal Posterity from the Dominions of *Ireland*; I say, there was scarce a Man very notorious, and eminent in Transgressions of this kind, who did not by some Act of Treachery first endeavour to merit from

from the *English*, and by that or by some other means fell into their Hands; and were by them publickly and reproachfully executed and put to Death.

This being the sad Condition the Lord Deputy was in; and the *Irish* Party having without his Leave, and against his exprefs Command, taken upon them to send Messengers into *Flanders*; to desire the Duke of *Lorraine* to take them into his Protection, offering to deliver several important Places and Sea-Towns into his Possession, and to become his Subjects; upon which Invitation the Duke sent over an Ambassador and a good Sum of Money for their present Relief; the Deputy was in a short Time reduced to those Straits, that he durst not remain in any Town, nor even in his own House for three Days together, but was forced for his Security to shift from Place to Place, and sometimes to lodge in the Woods and Fields in cold and wet Nights, by which he contracted those Infirmities and Diseases which shortly after brought him to his Grave; and in the end, he was compelled to accept a Pass from the *English*, who had a Reverence to his Person and unspotted Reputation, to transport himself into *England*, where his Wife and Family were, and where he died before he could procure Means to carry himself to the King, which he always intended to do.

When the *English* Commissioners had enlarged themselves with some Commotion in this Narration and Discourse, they again provoked the *Irish* Commissioners, to nominate one Person amongst themselves, or those for whom they appeared, who they believed could in Justice demand his Majesty's Favour; and if they could not make it evidently appear, that he had forfeited all his Title to Pardon after the Treaties, and that he had again been as faulty to the King as before, they would be very willing he should be made the Object of the King's Grace and Bounty, and be restored to his Estate. And then applying themselves to his Majesty, with great Duty and Submission, they concluded, That if any Persons had, by their subsequent or secret Services, or by their Attendance upon his Majesty, rendered themselves grateful to him, and worthy of his Royal Favour, they were very willing that his Majesty should restore all, or any of them to their Honours and Estates, in such manner as his Majesty in his Wisdom should think fit, and against all Impediments whatsoever. And hereupon several Acts of Parliament were passed, for the Indemnity and the restoring several Persons of Honour and Interest to their Estates; who either in Justice could require the same, as having been always faithful to the Crown, and suffered with it and for it; or who had so manifested their Affection and Duty for his Majesty, that he thought fit in that Consideration to wipe out the Memory of whatsoever had been formerly done amiss: And by this means many were in a short Time put into a full Possession of their Estates, to which they could make a good Pretence at the Time when the Rebellion begun.

The Consideration and Debate about the Settlement of *Ireland*, upon the Bill proposed, took up very many Days, his Majesty being always present, and in which there arose every Day new Difficulties. It appeared plainly enough, that the Guilt was so general, that if the Letter of the Act of Parliament of the Seventeenth Year of the late King were strictly pursued, almost an Extirpation of the whole Nation would follow, and which at best would be very miserable. Then the Transplantation into *Conought* had been acted, and finished so many Years before, (which was very prudently done in Point of Government, in respect of the unsteady Humour of that People, and their natural Inclination to rebel, if the same had been execu-

red by any Rules of Justice) and the Soldiers and Adventurers had been likewise so many Years in the Possession of their Lots, and had laid out so much Money in building and planting, that if his Majesty had reviewed all that had been done, and taken those Advantages upon former Miscarriages and Misapplications as in Law he might have done, the whole Foundations upon which all the Hopes rested of preserving that Kingdom within their Obedience to the Crown of *England* must have been shaken, and even dissolved. And then the Memory of the Beginning of the Rebellion in *Ireland* (how many other Rebellions soever had followed it, as bad or worse in respect of the Consequences that attended them) was as fresh and as odious to the whole People of *England*, as it had been the first Year; and the whole Nation upon the Matter (though there were many Persons of it of great Honour and Vertue) was fallen into that Contempt, that they seemed indeed in the Eyes of *Christendom*, worthy of the miserable Fate they were reduced to: And no doubt it was a Consideration that reasonably made them thought less worthy of extraordinary Favour and Compassion, that when both the other Nations had made many noble Attempts for redeeming their Liberty, and for the Restoration of his Majesty, (for *Scotland* it self had done much towards it) and his present Restoration was, by God's Blessing, and only with his Blessing, the sole Effect of the Courage and Affection of his own Subjects; so that *England* and *Scotland* had in a great Degree redeemed, and even undone what had before been done amiss; and his Majesty had approved and secured those Affections to them, by those Promises and Concessions which he was in Justice obliged to perform: But the miserable *Irish* alone had no Part in the Benefit his Majesty had received, nor had God suffered them to be the least Instruments in bringing his good Pleasure to pass, or to give any Testimony of their Repentance for the Wickedness they had wrought, or of their Resolutions to be better Subjects for the future; so that they seemed as a People left out and exempted from any Benefit from that blessed Conjunction in his Majesty's Restitution: And this Disadvantage was improved towards them by their frequent Manifestation of an inveterate Animosity against the *English* Nation and *English* Government; which again was recompenced to them by an irreconcilable Jealousy of all the *English* towards them; declaring plainly, that they could be no longer secure of any Thing they had, or should have in *Ireland*, than it should evidently appear that it was not in the Power of the *Irish* to take it from them; and to this Conclusion their present Confidence and Impudence contributed very much: And it appeared plainly enough, that they expected the same Concessions (which the Necessity of that Time had made fit to be granted to them) in respect of their Religion, and Liberty of Conscience, as they called it, should be now likewise confirmed, without which all other Graces would not be sufficient to contain them within the Limits of Subjection. This State and Condition of Affairs, and the Temper of the People, made it very necessary to the King to be very wary in dispensing his ordinary Favours (which his natural merciful Inclination prompted him to) to the *Irish*, and in the Alterations which Justice obliged him to make in that Kingdom, that the manner of it should make it appear, that it was the particular Justice in a particular Case, which could not be attended with a Consequence prejudicial to any general Interest.

There appeared in this Debate an Intention in the Soldiers and Adventurers, which was to have great Countenance and Approbation in the Bill now under Examination, to destroy all Intails and Settlements at Law upon
 Considera-

Consideration of Marriage, or any other Contracts which had been made before the Rebellion; nor had there been in the whole former Proceedings, in the Time of the Usurpation, any Consideration taken of Mortgages or Debts due by Statute or Reconizance, or upon any other Security; so that all such Debts must be either lost to the Proprietors, or remain still with the Interest upon the Land, whosoever had enjoyed the Benefit or the Profit thereof: All which seemed very unreasonable and unjust; and that such Estates should remain forfeited by the Treason of the Father, who had been only Tenant for Life, against all Descents and legal Titles of innocent Children, and of which in all legal Attainders the Crown never had or could receive any Benefit. Yet, how unreasonable soever these Pretences appeared to be, the Rules and Directions for the Remedy thereof were not very easy; the *English* declaring, that if such Titles were preserved and allowed to be good, there would not in that universal Guilt which upon the Matter comprehended and covered the whole *Irish* Nation, there would not be one Estate forfeited for Treason, but Intails and other useful Conveyances would be forged to defend and secure the same; nor would there be Witnesses wanting to justify and prove whatsoever their Evidence could be applied to: and if those Trials were to be by the known Rules and Customs of the Law in Cases of the like Nature, there was too much Reason to suspect and fear that there would be little Justice done, since a Jury of *Irish* would be sure to find against the *English*; and there was as much Reason to apprehend that the *English* would bring in their Verdict against the *Irish*, let the Evidence on either Side be what it would. However, the King was in no degree inclined, upon any Suggestions, to countenance such a bare-faced Violation of the Law by any Declaration in the Act; and after many Alterations and Amendments, and there remaining still so many Difficulties and Intricacies, he foresaw that all Matters were not yet so clearly stated, that the Settlement could be made by this Bill; but that such Preparations might be made towards it, and such Examinations taken, and some Particulars settled and adjusted, and what remained stated with more Clearness for his Majesty's Determination, he passed the first Act of Parliament, and committed the Execution thereof to too many Commissioners, nominated to his Majesty by those who were most conversant in the Affairs of *Ireland*; none, or very few of which were known to his Majesty, or to any of those who had been so many Years from their Country, in their constant Attendance upon his Majesty's Person beyond the Seas. And upon this Conclusion, and this Dispatch, the Commissioners from *Ireland* of all Kinds returned thither, the Earl of *Orrery* being one of the Three Justices who were entrusted with the Government.

After a Year spent in the Execution of this Commission, there was very little done towards the settling the Kingdom; but, on the contrary, the Breaches were made wider, and so much Passion and Injustice shewed, that Complaints were brought to his Majesty from all Parts of the Kingdom, and from all Persons in Authority. The Number of the Commissioners were so great, and their Interest so different, that they made no Dispatch; very many of them were in Possession of those Lands which others sued for, and bought the broken Titles and Pretences of others for inconsiderable Sums of Money, which they supported and made good by their own Authority; and those Men, who had their own particular Concernment chiefly to maintain, attended the Service very diligently: The few who were more indifferent, by having no Interest of their own at stake, were weary of their Attendance and Expence, (there being no Allowance
for

for their Pains,) and offended at the Partiality and Injustice they saw practised, withdrew themselves, and would be no longer present at those Transactions, which they could not regulate or reform: All Interests were equally offended and incensed; and the Soldiers and Adventurers complained no less of the Corruption and Injustice than the *Irish* did; so that the Lords Justices and Council found it necessary to transmit another Bill to his Majesty, which, as I remember, they called an Explanatory Bill of the former; by which they had provided, That no Person who lived in *Ireland*, or had any Pretence to an Estate there, should be employed as a Commissioner: but that his Majesty should be desired to send over a competent Number of well-qualified Persons out of *England* to attend that Service; upon whom a fit Salary should be settled by the Bill, and such Rules set down as might direct and govern the manner of their Proceedings; an Oath being likewise included in the Bill which the Commissioners were to take for the impartial Administration of Justice. And for the Prosecution of this new transmitted Act, several Persons were sent over to attend, and inform his Majesty and the Council upon any Difficulties or Scruples that might arise upon the several Claims and Pretences which were made.

This second Act took up as much Time as the former; all that had been said in the former Debates being again repeated, and almost with the same Passion and Impertinence; the *Irish* making large Observations upon the Proceedings of the late Commissioners, to justify those Fears and Apprehensions they had formerly urged. And there is too much Reason to believe, that their greatest Design now was rather to keep off any Settlement, than that they hoped to procure such a one as they desired; relying more to find their Account from a general Dissatisfaction, and the Distraction and Confusion which was like to attend it, than from any Determination that was like to be given in their Favour: which yet they did not despair of, as well by some Promises their Friends at Court had made to them, upon great Promises made first by them, as well as for the Prejudice they found was generally conceived against some of the Soldiers, and many of the Adventurers, who were like to gain most upon the Division. And though the *Irish* were in general Dread and Detestation for the Reasons aforesaid; yet there were many particular Men, both of the Soldiers and Adventurers, who, in respect of many notorious and opprobrious Actions against the Crown throughout their whole Employment, were as little satisfied with this Revolution as any Men could be, and were so universally odious both in *England* and *Ireland*, that if the King's Justice could have been observed, and their particular Cases sever'd from the rest, without Violation of the Rule which secured the rest, any thing that could have been done to their Detriment would have been grateful enough. However, after a very tedious Debate, his Majesty being assured by those who were thought to understand *Ireland* very exactly, and, upon the Surveys which had been taken of *Ireland* with great Punctuality, undertook that there was Land enough to satisfy all the Soldiers and Adventurers, and that there would be enough left for the Accommodation of the *Irish* in a liberal Proportion; and having given some Rules likewise and Limitations to the immoderate Pretences and Demands of the Soldiers and Adventurers upon the *Dublin* Ordinance, and imperfect Admeasurements, and some other Irregularities which in the Execution of the former Commission they had indulged to themselves, his Majesty likewise dispatched the second Bill.

Whilst

Whilst this second Bill was under Deliberation, there fell out some Accidents which produced great Alterations with reference to the Affairs of that Kingdom: The Earl of *Montroth*, who was one of the Justices, was lately dead; and it had been very apparent, that whilst he was alive, the Difference between the Three Justices, and their different Humours and Affections, had little advanced the settling the Government; so that they who took the most impartial Survey of all that was done, did conclude that nothing could be so reasonably done towards a Settlement, as the deputing one single Person to exercise that Government: And the Duke of *Albemarle* himself, who had a very considerable Estate in that Kingdom, which made him long for a Settlement, and who had both before the King's Return, and ever since, passionately insisted that the Duke of *Ormond* should not be employed there; who likewise had as great an Aversion from the Thought of it: I say, the General now had so totally changed his Mind, that he told the King, that there was no Way to explicate the Kingdom out of those Intricacies in which it was involved, but by sending over a Lord Lieutenant thither: that he thought it not fit for his Majesty's Service, that himself, who had the Commission of Lord-Lieutenant, should be absent from his Majesty's Person; and therefore that he was very ready and desirous to give up his Commission; and that in his Judgment no body would be able to settle and compose the several Factions in that Kingdom but the Duke of *Ormond*, which he thought would be very grateful to all sorts of People; and therefore his positive Advice was, that his Majesty would as soon as was possible grant his Commission of Lieutenancy to him, and send him over into *Ireland*; and both the King and the General had spoken with the Duke of *Ormond*, and prevailed with him to accept the Charge before ever I heard of it; all of them believing that the uncertainty of his being able to do the King Service in so general a Division and Jealousy of Persons, and Contradiction of Interests, and the great Affection and Friendship I had for the Duke of *Ormond*, would make me dissuade him from exposing himself to so hazardous an Undertaking; which was very true: But his Majesty believing that it was very necessary for his Service, and the Duke having always resigned himself to his Majesty's Disposal, he cheerfully undertook the Employment; and his Majesty named and appointed Sir *Richard Rainsford*, Serjeant at Law, (since made one of the Barons of his Majesty's Exchequer at *Westminster*) Sir *Edward Smith*, one of the Benchers of the *Middle Temple*, (afterwards made Chief Justice of his Majesty's Court of Common Pleas in *Ireland*,) *Henry Coventry*, one of his Majesty's Bed-chamber, Sir *Winston Churchill*, Col. *Edward Cooke*, Sir *Edward Deering*, and Sir *Thomas Beverly*, all Persons of very good Parts and very clear Reputations, to be his Commissioners for the Execution of the Bill of Settlement of *Ireland*: And with these, and all other Persons who attended that Interest, the Duke of *Ormond* entred upon his Journey for that Kingdom about *July* or *August* in the Year One Thousand Six Hundred Sixty Four, full Four Years after the King's happy Return into *England*. And when Mr. *Coventry* shortly after procured his Majesty's Leave to return to his Attendance upon his Person, Sir *Allen Broderick* was appointed to serve in his Place as a Commissioner.

It was some Months before the Commissioners, after their Arrival in *Ireland*, could settle those Orders and Rules for their proceeding which were necessary before they appointed the People to attend: and it was as necessary that they should in the Order of their Proceedings, first proceed

upon the *Irish*; both because there should be no Settlement of Soldiers or Adventurers in Possession of any Lands, before the Title of the *Irish* was determined; and because there was a Clause in the last Act of Parliament, that all the *Irish* should put in their Claims by such a Day, and be determined before such a Time; which Time might be prolonged for once by the Lord-Lieutenant and Council. So that the Delay for so many Months before the Commissioners sat, gave great Argument of Complaint to the *Irish*, though it could not possibly be avoided, in regard that the Commissioners themselves had not been nominated by the King above Twenty Days before they began their Journey for *Ireland*: so that they could never so much as read over the Acts of Parliament together before they came to *Dublin*; and then they found so many difficult Clauses in both Acts of Parliament, and so contrary to each other, that it was no easy matter to determine how to govern themselves in Point of Right, and to reduce themselves to any Method in their Proceedings: But after they had adjusted all Things as well as they could, they published their Orders in what Method they meant to proceed, and appointed the *Irish* to put in their Claims by such a Time, and to attend the Prosecution of them accordingly. And they had no sooner entred upon their Work, but the *English* thought they had begun it soon enough; for they heard every Day many of the *Irish*, who had been known to be the most forward in the first Beginning of the Rebellion, and the most malicious in carrying it on, declared innocent; and Deeds of Settlement and Entails, which had been never heard of before, and which would have been produced (as they reasonably believed) before the former Commissioners if they had had them to produce, now declared good and valid; by which the *Irish* were immediately put into Possession of a very great Quantity of Land taken from the *English*: So that in a short time the Commissioners had rendered themselves as generally odious as the *Irish*, and were looked upon as Persons corrupted for that Interest, which had every Day Success almost in whatsoever they pretended; and their Determinations happened to have the more of Prejudice upon them, because the Commissioners were always divided in their Judgments; and it is no wonder that they who seemed to adhere most to the *English* Interest were most esteemed by them. The Parliament in *Ireland* was then Sitting, and the *House of Commons* (consisting of very many Members who were either Soldiers or Adventurers, or had the like Interest) was very much offended at the Proceedings of the Commissioners, made many Votes against them, and threatened them with their Authority and Jurisdiction: but the Commissioners, who well knew their own Power, and that there was no Appeal against their Judgments, proceeded still in their own Method, and continued to receive the Claims of the *Irish* beyond the Time that the Act of Parliament or the Act of State limited to them, as was generally understood; and during their last Eight or Ten Days Sittings upon those Claims, they passed more Judgments and Determinations than in near a Year before, indeed with wonderful Expedition; when the *English*, who were dispossessed by those Judgments, had not their Witnesses ready, presuming that in Point of Time those Causes could not have been heard. By these Sentences and Decrees, many Hundred Thousand of Acres were adjudged to the *Irish*, which had been looked upon as unquestionably forfeited. This raised so great a Clamour, that the *English* refused to yield Possession upon the Decrees of the Commissioners; who, by an Omission in the Act of Parliament, were not qualified with Power enough to provide for the Execution of their own Sentences: The Courts

of

of Law established in that Kingdom would not, nor indeed could, give any Assistance to the Commissioners; and the Lord-Lieutenant and Council, who had, in the Beginning, by their Authority put many of those into Possession of those Lands which the Commissioners had decreed to them, were now more tender and reserved in that multitude of Decrees which had lately passed: so that the *Irish* were using their utmost Endeavours by Force to recover the Possession of those Lands which the Commissioners had decreed to them, whilst the *English* were likewise resolved by Force to defend what they had been so long possess'd of, notwithstanding the Commissioners Determination; and the Commissioners themselves were so far troubled and dissatisfied with these Proceedings, and with some intricate Clauses in the Act of Parliament concerning the future Prosecution of that Affair, that tho' they had not yet made any Entrance upon the Decision of the Claims of the *English* or of the *Irish* Protestants, they declared that they would proceed no further upon the Execution of their Commission, until they could receive his Majesty's Pleasure; and for the better doing thereof, they desired his Majesty's Leave that they might attend his Royal Person; and there being at the same time several Complaints made against them to his Majesty, and Appeals made to him from their Decrees, his Majesty gave the Commissioners Leave to return; and at the same time all the other Interests sent their Deputies to solicit their Right: In the Prosecution whereof, after much Time spent, the King likewise thought fit to receive the Advice and Assistance of his Lieutenant; and so the Duke of *Ormond* likewise attended his Majesty, and the Settlement of *Ireland* was the third time brought before his Majesty and his Council; there being then likewise transmitted a third Bill as additional and supplemental to the other two, and to reverse many of the Decrees made by the Commissioners, they bearing the Reproach of all that had been done, or had succeeded amiss, and of all Persons who were grieved of any kind soever.

The King was very tender of the Reputation of his Commissioners, who had been always esteemed Men of great Probity, and unquestionable Reputation; and though he could not refuse to receive Complaints, yet he gave those who complained no farther Countenance, than to give the others Opportunity to vindicate themselves; nor did there appear the least Evidence to question the Sincerity of their Proceedings, or to make them liable to any reasonable Suspicion of Corruption; and the Complaints were still prosecuted by those, who had That taken from them which they desired to have kept for themselves. The truth is, there is reason enough to believe, that upon the first Arrival of the Commissioners in *Ireland*, and some Conversation they had, and the Observation they made of the great Bitterness and Animosity from the *English*, both Soldiers and Adventurers, towards the whole *Irish* Nation, of what kind soever; the scandalous Proceeding of the late Commissioners upon the first Act, where they had not been guided by any Rules of Justice, but rejecting all Evidence which might operate to the taking any Thing from them which they resolved to keep, the Judges themselves being both Parties and Witnesses in all the Causes brought before them; together with the very ill Reputation very many of the Soldiers and Adventurers had, for extraordinary Malice to the Crown, and to the Royal Family; and the notable Barbarity they had exercised towards the *Irish*, who, without doubt, for many Years had undergone the most cruel Oppressions of all Kinds that can be imagined, many Thousands of them having been forced, without being covered under any House, to perish in the open Fields for Hunger; the infamous Purchases
which

which had been made by many Persons; who had compelled the *Irish* to sell their Remainders and lawful Pretences, for very inconsiderable Sums of Money: I say, these and many other Particulars of this kind, together with some Attempts that had been made upon their first Arrival, to corrupt them, against all Pretences which should be made by the *Irish*, might probably dispose the Commissioners themselves to such a Prejudice against many of the *English*, and to such a Compassion towards the *Irish*, that they might be too much inclined to favour their Pretences and Claims; and to believe that the Peace of the Kingdom and his Majesty's Government, might be better provided for, by their being settled in the Lands of which they had been formerly possessed, than by supporting the ill-gotten Titles of those who had manifested all imaginable Infidelity and Malice against his Majesty, whilst they had any Power to oppose him; and had not given any Testimony of their Conversion, or of their Resolution to yield him for the future a perfect and intire Obedience, when they could oppose him no longer; as if they desired only to retain those Lands they had gotten by Rebellion, together with the Principles upon which they had received them, until they should have an Opportunity to justify both by some new Power or Concurrence amongst themselves. Whencesoever it proceeded, it was plain enough the *Irish* had received more Favour than was expected or imagined; and in the very Entrance into the Work, to avoid the Partiality which was too apparent in the *English* towards each other, and their Animosity against the *Irish* as evident, very strict Rules had been set down by the Commissioners, what kind of Evidence they would admit to be good, and receive accordingly; and it was provided, that the Evidence of no Soldier, or Adventurer, should be received in any Case, to which himself was never so much a Stranger; as, if his own Lot had fallen in *Munster*, and that he had no Pretence to any Thing out of that Province, his Evidence should not be received as to any Thing that he had seen done in *Lempster* or *Conought*, or *Ulster*, wherein he was not at all concerned; which was thought to be a very unjust Rule, after so many Years expired, and so many Persons dead, who had likewise been present at those Actions: And by this means many Persons were declared not to have been in Rebellion, when there was full Evidence that they had been present in such and such a Battle, and in such and such a Siege, if the Witnesses might have been received, who were then present at those Actions, and ready to give Testimony of it, and of such Circumstances as could not be feigned, if their Evidence might have been received. That which raised the greatest Umbrage against the Commissioners was, That a great Number of the most infamous Persons of the *Irish* Nation, who were looked upon by those of their own Country with the greatest Detestation, as Men who had been the most violent Fomenters and Prosecutors of the Rebellion, and the greatest Opposers of all moderate Counsels, and of all Expedients which might have contributed towards a Peace in the late King's Time, whereby the Nation might have been redeemed, and who had not had the Confidence so much as to offer any Claim before the late Commissioners, were now adjudged and declared Innocents, and so restored to their Estates; and that many others, who had in Truth never been in Rebellion, but notoriously served the King against the Rebels, both in *England* and *Ireland*, and had never been put out of the Possession of their Estates, were now upon some slight Evidence, by the Interception of Letters, or Confession of Messengers that they had some Correspondence with the Rebels, though it was evident, that even that Correspondence was perfunctory, and only

to secure them that they might pursue his Majesty's Service, were condemned, and had their Estates taken away from them. Many who had formerly made their Claims, without insisting upon any Deeds of Settlement or other Conveyances in Law, now produced formal Settlements, in Consideration of Marriage, or other like good Considerations in Law, made before the Beginning of the Rebellion; which being now proved by Witnesses enough, Decrees were every Day obtained for the Restitution of great Quantities of Land upon those Deeds and Conveyances: though the Forgeries of those Deeds, and Perjuries of the Witnesses were very notorious, and some Instances were given of the Manifestation and direct Proof made of the Forgery of Deeds, upon which Decrees had been made, to the Satisfaction of the Commissioners themselves, within a very short Time after the pronouncing such Decrees, and yet no Reparation was given, but the said Decrees proceeded, and were executed with all Rigour. The Commissioners answered, That they had made no Decrees but according to their Consciences, and such as they were obliged to make by the Course and Rules of Justice; that they did not doubt, but in Truth did believe, that there had been evil Practices used, both in forging of Deeds and corrupting of Witnesses, and that the same was equally practised by the *English* as well as the *Irish*; and therefore that they had been obliged to make that Order which had been so much excepted against, not to admit the Testimony of any *English* Adventurer or Soldier in the Case of another Adventurer or Soldier: for that it was very notorious they looked upon the Whole as one joint Interest, and so gratified each other in their Testimonies; and of this they gave many sad Instances, by which it was too evident, that the Perjuries were mutual, and too much entertained by the one and the other Side: That they had used the best Providence and Vigilance they could, by the careful Examination of the Witnesses, which were produced apart, and never in the Presence of each other, and by asking them all such material Questions as occurred to their Understandings, and which they could not expect to be asked, to discover the Truth, and to prevent and manifest all Perjury: That they had likewise used their utmost Diligence and Care to prevent their being imposed upon with false and forged Deeds and Conveyances, by taking a precise and strict View themselves of all Deeds produced; and interrogated the Witnesses with all the Cunning they could, upon the Matter and Consideration upon which such Deeds had been entered into, and upon the Manner and Circumstances in the Execution thereof; which was all the Providence they could use; and though they met with many Reasons oftentimes to doubt the Integrity of the Proceedings, and in their own private Consciences to apprehend there might be great Corruption, yet that they were obliged judicially to determine according to the Testimony of those Witnesses, and the Evidence of those Deeds in Law, against which no Proofs were made: That they had constantly heard all that the adverse Party thought fit to object, both against the Credit of any Witnesses, and the Truth of any Conveyances which were produced; upon which they had rejected many Witnesses, and disallowed some Conveyances: but when the Objections were only founded upon Presumptions and Probabilities, as most usually they were, they could not weigh down the full and categorical Evidence that was given: That if they had yielded to the Importunities of the Persons concerned, who oftentimes pressed to have further Time given them to prove such a Perjury, or to disprove such a Conveyance, it must have made their Work endless, and stopped all manner of Proceedings, for which it appeared that they were

Q

straight.

streightned too much in Time, and that in truth would have but open'd the Door wider for Perjury and other Corruptions; since it was very plain to them, that either Side could bring as many Witnesses as they pleased, to prove what they pleased, and that they would bring as many as they believed necessary for the Work in hand: And therefore that the Commissioners having before prescribed a Method and Rules to themselves for their Proceeding, and that no Man could have a Cause in which he was concerned brought to Hearing without his knowing when it was to be so heard, and so it was to be presumed that he was well provided to support his own Title; and therefore that they had thought fit upon mature Deliberation amongst themselves, to adhere to the Order they had prescribed to themselves, and others, and to conclude that they could not be able to prove that at another Day, which they were not to prove then: For the Discovery of any Forgery after the Decrees had been passed, and upon which they had given no Reparation, they confessed some few such Discoveries had been made to them, by which the Forgery appeared very clearly; but as they had not Power by the Act of Parliament, to punish either Forgery or Perjury, but must leave the Examination and Punishment thereof to the Law, and to the Judges of the Law; so that they had only Authority to make Decrees upon such Grounds as satisfied them in their Consciences, but had not any Authority to reverse those Decrees after they were once made and published, upon any Evidence whatsoever. They concluded with their humble Desire to the King, that the strictest Examination might be made of their Corruptions, in which they were sure to be found very innocent, against all the Malice that was discovered against them: That they had proceeded in all Things according to the Integrity of their own Hearts, and the best of their Understandings; and if they had, through the Defect of that, erred in any Part of their Determinations, they hoped their want of Wisdom should not be imputed to them as a Crime.

Many who had a very good Opinion of the Persons and Abilities of the Commissioners, were not yet satisfied with their Defence; nor did they believe that they were so strictly bound to judge upon the Deposition of suspected Witnesses: but that they were therefore trusted with an arbitrary Power, because it was foreseen that Juries would not have been intire; so that they were, upon weighing all Circumstances, to declare what in their Consciences they believed to be true and just: That if they had bound themselves up by too strict and unreasonable Rules, that they should rather have in Time reformed those Rules, than thought to support what was done amiss, by the Observation of what they had prescribed to themselves; and it was believed that the intire Exclusion of the *English* from the proving of what could not in Nature be otherwise proved, was not just or reasonable: That their want of Power to reverse or alter their own Decrees upon any emergent Reasons which could afterwards occur, was a just Ground for their serious Deliberation in and before they passed any such Decrees; and their Excuse for not granting longer Time, when it was pressed for, upon Reasons which were very visible, was not to be justified, it not being possible for any Man to defend himself against the Claims of the *Irish*, without knowing what Deeds or Witnesses they would produce for making good their Suggestions; and therefore it was as impossible for them to have all their Evidence upon the Place: Besides that, it was very evident, that in their last Ten Days of their Sitting, (which were likewise thought to be when their Power as to those Particulars was determined,

and

and in which they had made more Decrees than in all the Time before) they had made so many in a Day, (contrary to their former Rule and Method) that Men were plainly surpris'd, and could not produce those Proofs which in a very short Time they might have been supplied with; and the refusing to allow them that Time, was upon the Matter to determine their Interest, and take away their Estates, without being once heard, and upon the bare Allegations of their Adversaries; and in those latter Decrees many Instances were given of that Nature, wherein the Evidence appeared to be very full, if Time had been given to produce it.

There was one very notable Case decreed by the Commissioners extremely complain'd of, and cried out upon by all Parties, as well *Irish* as *English*; and for which the Commissioners themselves made no other Excuse or Defence but the Receipt of a Letter from the King; which was not thought a good Excuse for sworn Judges as the Commissioners were: It was the Case of the Marquis of *Antrim*; which Case having been so much upon the Stage, and so much enlarged upon, to the Reproach of the King, and even to the traducing of the Memory of his blessed Father; and some Men, who most contributed to what was unwarily done in that Affair, having done all they could to wound my Reputation, and to get it to be believed that I mis'd his Majesty, by my Advice, to oblige that Marquis; I think it a Debt due to Truth, and to the Honour of both their Majesties, as well as for my own Vindication, to set down a very particular Narration of that whole Affair; by which it will appear, how far the King was from so much as wilhing that any thing should be done for the Benefit of the Marquis, which should be contrary to the Rules of Justice. Whilst his Majesty was in Foreign Parts, he received frequent Advertisements from *England* and from *Ireland*, that the Marquis of *Antrim* behaved himself very undutifully to him; that he had made himself very grateful to the Rebels, by calumniating the late King; and that he had given it under his Hand to *Ireton*, or some other principal Person employed under *Cromwell*, that his late Majesty had sent him into *Ireland* to join with the Rebels, and that he was not offended with the *Irish* for entring into that Rebellion. Which was a Calumny so false and so odious, and reflected so much upon the Honour of his Majesty, that the King was long resolv'd, as soon as God should put it into his Power, to cause the strictest Examination to be taken concerning it: The Report having gained much Credit with his Majesty, by the Notoriety that the Marquis had procured great Recommendations from those who governed in *Ireland* to those who governed in *England*; and that upon the Presumption of that he had come into *England*, and as far as *St. Albans* towards *London*; from whence he was forced suddenly to return into *Ireland* by the Activity of his many Creditors, who, upon the News of his coming, had provided for his Reception, and would unavoidably have cast him into Prison; and no Recommendation could have inclin'd those who were in Authority to do any thing extraordinary for the Protection of a Person, who from the Beginning of the *Irish* Rebellion lay under so ill a Character with them, and had so ill a Name throughout the Kingdom.

The King had been very few Days in *London*, after his Arrival from the Parts beyond the Seas, when he was inform'd that the Marquis of *Antrim* was upon his Way from *Ireland* towards the Court; and the Commissioners from *Ireland*, who have been mentioned before, were the first (if I remember well) who gave his Majesty that Information; and at the same time told him, all that his Majesty had heard before concerning the

Marquis

Marquis, and of the bold Calumnies with which he had traduced his Royal Father, with many other Particulars; all which they affirmed would be proved by unquestionable Evidence, and by Letters and Certificates under his own Hand. Upon this full Information, (of the Truth whereof his Majesty entertained no doubt) as soon as the Marquis came to Town, he was, by the King's special Order, committed to the *Tower*; nor could any Petition from him, or Intreaty of his Friends, (of which he had some very powerful) prevail with his Majesty to admit him into his Presence; but by the first Opportunity he was sent Prisoner to *Dublin*, where he was committed to the Castle, his Majesty having given Direction that he should be proceeded against with all Strictness according to Law; and to that purpose the Lords Justices were required to give all Orders and Directions necessary. The Marquis still profess'd his Innocence, and used all the means he could to procure that he might be speedily brought to his Tryal, which the King likewise expected; but after a Year's Detention in Prison, and nothing brought against him, he was set at Liberty, and had a Pass given him by the Council there to come into *England*. He then applied himself to his Majesty, demanding nothing of Favour; but expected Justice, and that after so many Years being deprived of his Estate he might at last be restored to it, if nothing could be objected against him wherein he had diserved his Majesty. He was a Gentleman that from his Youth had been bred up in the Court of *England*; and having married the Dutchess of *Buckingham*, he had been very well received by both their Majesties, and was frequently in their Presence; he had spent a very vast Estate in the Court, without ever having received the least Benefit or Advantage from it; he had retired into *Ireland*, and lived upon his own Estate in that Country some Years before the Rebellion broke out; in the Beginning whereof he underwent some Suspicion, having had some Correspondence with them, and possibly made some Undertakings to them; but he went speedily to *Dublin*, and from thence transported himself to *Oxford* to his Majesty, to whom he gave so good an Account of all that had passed, that the King had no doubt of his Affection to his Service, tho' he had little Confidence in his Judgment and Understanding, which were never very remarkable: Besides that, it was well known that he had a very unreasonable Envy towards the Marquis of *Ormond*, and would fain have it believed that his Interest in *Ireland* was so great, that he could easily reclaim that whole Nation to his Majesty's Obedience; but that Vanity and Presumption never gained the least Credit with his Majesty.

Upon the *Scots* entring into *England* with their Army upon the Obligation of their Covenant, and all his Majesty's Endeavours to prevent it being disappointed, the Marquis of *Montrose* had proposed to his Majesty to make a Journey privately into *Scotland*, and to get into the *Highlands*; where, with his Majesty's Authority, he hoped he should be able to draw together such a Body of Men as might give his Countrymen cause to call for their own Army out of *England* to secure themselves; and with this Overture, or upon the Debate thereof, that the Earl of *Antrim* (for he was then no more) might be likewise sent into *Ulster* where his Interest lay, from whence he would be able to transport a Body of Men into the *Highlands*, where he had likewise the Clan of the *Macdonnalds*, who acknowledged him to be their Chief, and would be consequently at his Devotion; by which means the Marquis of *Montrose* would be enabled the more powerfully to proceed in his Undertaking. The Earl of *Antrim* entered upon his Undertaking with great Alacrity, and undertook to the King

to perform great Matters in *Scotland*, to which his own Interest and Animosity enough disposed him, having an old and sharp Controversy and Contestation with the Earl of *Argyle*, who had dispossessed him of a large Territory there. All Things being adjusted for this Undertaking, and his Majesty being well pleased with the Chearfulness of the Earl's Undertaking, he created him at that Time a Marquis, gave him Letters to the Marquis of *Ormond* his Lieutenant there, as well to satisfy him of the good Opinion he had of the Marquis of *Antrim*, and of the Trust he had reposed in him, as to wish him to give him all the Assistance he could with Convenience for the carrying on that Expedition for *Scotland*; and for the better preventing of any Inconvenience that might fall out by the Rashness and Inadvertency of the Marquis towards the Marquis of *Ormond*, his Majesty sent *Daniel O Neil*, one of his Bed-Chamber, into *Ireland* with him, who had great Power over him, and very much Credit with the Marquis of *Ormond*, and was a Man of that Address and Dexterity, that no Man could so well prevent the Inconveniencies and Prejudice which his natural Indiscretion and Levity might tempt the Marquis to, or more dispose and incline the Lord-Lieutenant to take little Notice of those Vanities and Indiscretions; and the King did likewise, having no Desire that the Marquis should stay long in *Dublin*, and he promising at his going from *Oxford*, that he would in Person go into *Scotland* with his Forces, give him leave to hold that Correspondence with the *Irish* Rebels (who had the Command of the most *Northern* Parts, and without whose Connivance at least he would very hardly be able to make his Levies, and transport his Men) as was necessary to that End: Within the Limits of which, it is probable enough that he did not contain himself, and might say many Things which he had not the least Authority to warrant him in.

Upon his coming to *Dublin*, the Lord-Lieutenant gave him all the Countenance he could wish, and assisted him in all the Ways he could to prosecute his Design; but the Men were to be raised in or near the Rebels Quarters: And it cannot be denied but that the Levies he made, and sent over into *Scotland* under the Command of *Kalketo*, was the Foundation of all those wonderful Acts which were afterwards performed by the Marquis of *Montrose*; they were Fifteen Hundred very good Men, with very good Officers, all so hardy, that neither the ill Fare nor the ill Lodging in the *Highlands*, gave them any Discouragement, and gave the first Reputation to the Marquis of *Montrose* of being at the Head of an Army; under which he drew together such of the *Highlanders*, and others of his Friends who were willing to repair to him; but upon any Military Action and Defeat given by them to the Enemy, which happened as often as they encounter'd the *Scots*, they went always home with their Booty to their Houses, and the *Irish* only stayed together with their General. And from this Beginning the Marquis of *Montrose* grew to that Power, that after many Battles won by him with notable Slaughters of the Enemy, in one of which he defeated the Marquis of *Argyle* with his Army of above treble the Number of what *Montrose* had, and in which the Marquis of *Argyle* was forced to make his Escape, by putting himself almost single into a Boat, and so putting himself off into the Sea, having left, besides others, many of his own Name and Family dead upon the Ground; after which the Marquis of *Montrose* marched victoriously with his Army till he made himself Master of *Edenborough*, and redeemed out of the Prison there the Earl of *Crawford*, Lord *Ogilby*, and many others of his Friends, who had been taken and sent thither with the Resolution that they should

all lose their Heads; and the Marquis of *Montrofs* himself did always acknowledge, that the Rise of his good Success was due and to be imputed to that Body of *Irish* which had in the Beginning been sent over by the Marquis of *Antrim*; to whom the King had acknowledged the Service by several Letters all in his own Hand, in which were very gracious Expressions of the Sense his Majesty had of his great Services, and his Resolution to reward him. It is true, the Marquis of *Antrim* himself had not gone over with his Men as he promised to do, but stayed behind in *Ireland*, under Pretence of raising a greater Body of Men, with which he would venture his own Person; but either out of Jealousy or Displeasure against the Marquis of *Montrofs*, or having in truth no Mind to that Service, he never pursued the one nor the other, but remained not only in the Enemies Quarters, but in their Councils, taking all Occasions to cross whatsoever the Lord-Lieutenant most desired; by which he gave so great Advantages against himself, and might in Strictness of Law have been as severely punished by the King as the worst of the Rebels. At last, after he had been taken Prisoner by the *English* or *Scotch*, and made his Escape out of their Hands, he transported himself into *Flanders*, and from thence came into the *West* into the Harbour of *Falmouth*, when the Prince (his Majesty that now is) was in *Cornwall*; to whom he immediately made tender of his Service with two good Frigates which he had, and in which were likewise a Quantity of Arms and some Ammunition, which he had procured in *Flanders* for the Supply of *Ireland*. Most of the Arms and Ammunition were employed with his Consent for supplying of the Troops and Garrisons in *Cornwall*; and his Majesty made use of one of the Frigates to transport his Person to *Scilly*, and from thence to *Jersey*; without which Convenience, the Prince had been exposed to very great Difficulties. And after all which, *Dublin* being given up to the Parliament, and the King's Authority withdrawn from that Kingdom, he again transported himself into *Ireland*, and joined with the *Irish*, and was by them sent into *France* to desire the Queen-Mother and the Prince to send the Marquis of *Ormond* to exercise his Majesty's Government in that Kingdom; which was done accordingly in the manner as is mentioned before.

The Marquis of *Antrim* alledged all these Particulars, and produced many original Letters from the late King, the Queen-Mother, and the Prince, in all which his Services had been acknowledged, and many Promises made to him: and concluded with a full Protestation, that he desired no Pardon for any thing he had ever done against the King; but if that there were the least Proof that he had failed in his Fidelity to him, or had not according to the best of his Understanding advanced his Service, he looked for no Favour: But if his being in the *Irish* Quarters and consulting with them, without which he could not have made his Levies for *Scotland*, and his joining with them afterwards when his Majesty's Authority was withdrawn from thence, do by the strict Letter of the Law expose him to Ruin without his Majesty's Grace and Favour, he did hope his Majesty would redeem him from that Misery, and that the Forfeiture of his Estate should not be taken, as if he were a Traytor and a Rebel to the King: And it appeared, that if he were restored to all he could pretend, his Debts were so great, and his Creditors had that legal Incumbrance upon his Fortune, that his Condition at best would not be liable to much Envy. Though the King had never been taken Notice of to have any great Inclinations to the Marquis, who was very little known to him; yet this Representation and clear View of what he had done, and what he had suffered, raised great Com-

passion

passion towards him in his Majesty's Royal Breast; and he thought it would in some degree reflect upon his own Honour and Justice, and upon the Memory of his blessed Father, if in a Time when he passed by so many heinous Transgressions, he should leave the Marquis to the Fury of his Enemies, for no other Crime upon the Matter, than for not having that Prudence and Justice in his Endeavours to serve the King, as he ought to have had; and the Rigour he had exercised towards him upon his first Arrival, in sending him to be tried in *Ireland* by those who enough wished his Destruction, and that they had not been able to make the least Proof against him, improved his Majesty's good Disposition towards him: Yet he refused positively to write a Letter to the Commissioners on his behalf, which the Marquis most importunately desired, as the only Thing that could do him good; but his Majesty directed a Letter to be prepared to the Lord-Lieutenant, in which all his Allegations and Suggestions should be set down, and the Truth thereof examined by the Lord-Lieutenant; and that if he should be found to have committed no greater Faults against his Majesty than those which he confessed, that then the Letter should be sent to the Commissioners, that they might see both their Majesties Testimonies in such Particulars as were known to themselves. And this Letter was very warily drawn, and being approved by his Majesty, was sent accordingly to the Lord-Lieutenant; and shortly after was, contrary to his Majesty's Resolution, and contrary to my Advice, and without my Knowledge and Privy, likewise sent to the Commissioners; who had thereupon made such a Decree as is before mentioned, and declared that they had made it only upon that Ground: Which gave his Majesty some Trouble, and obliged him to insert a Clause in the next Bill concerning that Affair. And this was the whole Proceeding that related to the Marquis of *Antrim*, in which I had no Temptation of any Kind to incline me; and I do yet want Understanding to comprehend how there was more Favour shewed towards him by his Majesty, than he might in truth very reasonably pretend to, what Noise soever hath been raised, and what Glosses soever have been made upon that whole Transaction.

When his Majesty enter'd upon the Debate of this Third Bill, which was transmitted to him for a Supplement and Addition to the former Two, he quickly found the Settlement proposed, and which was the End of the Three Bills, was now grown more difficult than ever: All the Measures which had formerly been taken, from the great Proportion of Land which would remain to be disposed of, were no more to be relied upon, but appeared to have been a wrong Foundation from the Beginning; which was now made more desperate, by the vast Proportions which had been assigned to the *Irish* by the Commissioners Decrees; and somewhat had intervened by some Acts of Bounty from his Majesty, which had not been carefully enough watched and represented to him. The King had upon passing the former Bills, and upon discerning how much the *Irish* were like to suffer, resolved to retain all that should by Forfeiture or otherwise come to his Majesty, in his own Power, to the End that when the Settlement should be made, he might be able to gratify those of the *Irish* Nation, who had had any thing of Merit towards him, or been least faulty; but he had unawares swerved from that Rule, and had made several Grants, out of his Royal Bounty, to many of his Servants, who had been encouraged by their Friends in *Ireland* to make those Suits, and had procured Certificates from thence; which being produced to his Majesty, had disposed him to those Concessions, which otherwise he would not so easily have passed:

passed: There was besides in all such Grants a new Clause introduced, of a very new Nature; for they being grounded always upon Letters out of *England*, and passed under the Great Seal of *Ireland*, the Letters were formed there, and transmitted hither only for his Majesty's Sign Manual; so that neither his Majesty's learned Counsel at Law, nor any other his Ministers (the Secretaries only excepted) had any Notice of such Grants. The Clause was, That if any of those Lands so granted by his Majesty, should be otherwise decreed, his Majesty's Grantee should be reprimanded with other Lands; so that in many Cases the greatest Inducement to his Majesty's Bounty being the Uncertainty of his own Right, which the Person to whom it was granted was obliged to vindicate at his own Charge, his Majesty was now bound to make it good if his Grant was not valid; and so that which was but a contingent Bounty, was turned into a real and substantial Benefit, as a Debt from his Majesty: Which created another Difficulty in the Settlement; which was yet the more hard, because there were many Claims of the *Irish* themselves yet unheard, all the false Admeasurements to be examined, and many other Uncertainties to be determined by the Commissioners, which left those who were in Possession, as well as those who were not, in the highest Insecurity and Apprehension.

This Intricacy and even Despair which possessed all kind of People of any Settlement, made all of them willing to contribute to any that could be proposed. They found his Majesty very unwilling to consent to the Repeal of the Decrees made by the Commissioners; which must have taken away the Confidence and Assurance of whatsoever should be done hereafter, by making Men see that what was settled by one Act of Parliament might be unsettled by another; so that there was no hope by such an Expedient to increase the Number of Acres, which being left might in any Degree comply with the several Pretences: The *Irish* found that they might only be able to obstruct any Settlement, but should never be able to get such a one as would turn to their own Satisfaction: The Soldiers and Adventurers agreed less amongst themselves; and the Clamour was as great against those, who by false Admeasurements had got more than they should have, as from those who had received less than their due; and they who least feared any new Examination could not yet have any secure Title, before all the rest were settled. In a word, all Men found that any Settlement would be better than none; and that more Profit would arise from a smaller Proportion of Land quietly possessed, and husbanded accordingly, than of a much greater Proportion under a doubtful Title, and an Uncertainty which must dishearten any Industry and Improvement. Upon these Considerations and Motives they met amongst themselves, and debated together by what Expedient they might draw Light out of this Darkness: There appeared only one Way which administered any reasonable Hope, which was, by increasing the Stock for Reprisals to such a Degree, that all Mens Pretences might in some measure be provided for; and there was no other way to arrive to this, but by every Man's parting with somewhat which he thought his own: and to this they had one Incouragement, which was of the highest Importance to them, which was, that this way an End would be put to the unlimited Jurisdiction of the Commissioners, (which was very terrible to them) who from henceforth would have little other Power than to execute what should be here agreed upon. In Conclusion, they brought a Proposition to the King, raised and digested between themselves, that all Persons, who were to receive any Benefit by this Act, should abate and give a fourth Part of what he had towards the Stock for Reprisals; all which the

the Commissioners should distribute amongst those *Irish* who should appear most fit for his Majesty's Bounty; and this Agreement was so unanimous, that though it met with some obstinate Opposition after it was brought before his Majesty, yet the Number of the Opposers was so small in respect of the others who agreed to it, that they grew weary and ashamed of farther Contention; and thereupon that Third Act of Settlement as supplemental to the other Two, was consented to by the King: who, to publish to the World that nothing stuck with him which seemed to reflect upon the Commissioners to their Prejudice, resolved to make no Change; and so though Mr. Baron *Rainsford* and Sir *Thomas Beverly* made their humble Suit to his Majesty, that they might not return again into *Ireland*, his Majesty did not grant their Request, and continued Sir *Edward Smith*, who was now Chief Justice of the *Common-Pleas* in that Kingdom, Sir *Edward Deering*, Sir *Allen Broderick* (who had succeeded Mr. *Coventry* in that Office, when he returned to Court) Sir *Winstan Churchill*, and Colonel *Cooke*, his Commissioners, to execute what was done by this new Act, and so to perfect the Settlement. These were all the Transactions with reference to *Ireland* which I was privy to, and in which I assisted, as all the rest of my Lords of the Council who were present did; and did very little more in it than any of the rest did, except when any Difficulties occurred in their private Meetings and Debates, they sometimes resorted to me for Advice; which I was very ready to give them to the best of my Understanding, being very ready and willing to take any Pains which might make that very difficult Work more easy to be compassed; but as I never deserved any Reward for so doing, so I never received the Benefit of one Shilling in Money, or Monies worth, for any thing that was done in that Affair; and was so far from entertaining any Overture made to that purpose, that it is notoriously known to some Persons of Honour, who, I presume, will be ready to testify the same, that when upon his Majesty's first Return into *England*, some Propositions were made to me, of receiving the Grant of some forfeited Lands, and for the buying of other Lands there, upon the Desire of the Owners thereof, and at so low a Price that the very Profit of the Land would in a short Time have paid for the Purchase; and other Overtures of immediate Benefit in Money, which others did and lawfully might accept; I rejected all Propositions of that kind, or relating to it, and declared publickly and privately, that I would neither have Lands in *Ireland*, or the least Benefit from thence, till all Differences and Pretences there were so fully agreed and settled, that there could be no more Appeal to the King, or repairing to his Majesty and Council for Justice; in which I told them, I should never be thought so competent an Adviser, after I had any Title of my own in that Kingdom, to bias my Inclinations; and I never took a firmer Resolution in any Particular in my Life, than to adhere to that Conclusion: Yet because it is notorious enough, that I did receive afterwards some Money out of *Ireland*, and have a very lawful Title to receive more, it is necessary for my own intire Vindication, to set down particularly how that came to pass, and to mention all the Circumstances which preceeded, accompanied, or attended that Affair.

Amongst the Bills which were first transmitted from *Ireland* after his Majesty's happy Return, there was an Imposition of a certain Sum of Money upon some specified Lands, in the several Provinces, (the Nature whereof I cannot charge my Memory with) which were to be paid to his Majesty within a limited Time, and to be disposed of by his Majesty to

such Persons who had served him faithfully, and suffered in so doing, or Words to that Effect; for I may with a very good Conscience say, that I never to this Minute read the Act of Parliament, and am most confident that I never heard of it at the Time when it passed, being often absent from the Council by reason of the Gout or other Accidents, when such Matters were transacted. But very near two Years after his Majesty's Return, I received a Letter from the Earl of *Orrery*, that there would be in his Hands, and the Earl of *Anglesey's*, and Lord *Mazzarin's*, (who it seems were appointed Treasurers to receive the Money raised by that Act of Parliament) a good Sum of Money for me; which he gave me Notice of, to the end that I might give Direction for the Disposal thereof, whether I would have it returned into *England* to me in Money, or laid out in Land in *Ireland*; and he wished that I would speedily send my Direction, because he was confident that the Money would be paid in at least by the Time that my Letter could arrive there. No Man can be more surprised with any thing, than I was at the Receipt of this Letter; believing that there was some Mistake in it, and that my Name might have been used in Trust by some Body who had given me no Notice of it; and without returning any Answer to the Earl of *Orrery*, I writ by that Post to the Lord-Lieutenant (for it was after his first going into *Ireland*) to inform him what my Lord of *Orrery* had writ to me, and to desire him to inform me by his own Inquiry what the Meaning of it might be. Before I had an Answer from the Lord-Lieutenant, or indeed before my Letter could come to his Hands, I received a second Letter from the Earl of *Orrery*; in which he informed me, that there was now paid in, to my Use, the Sum of Twelve Thousand Six Hundred Pounds, or thereabouts, and that there would be the like Sum again received at the End of Six Months; sending me likewise a particular Direction to what Person, and in what Form, I was to send my Order for the Payment of the Money. I forbore likewise to answer this Letter, till I had received an Answer from the Lord-Lieutenant; who then informed me at large, what Title I had to this Money, and how I came to have it: That shortly after the passing of that Act of Parliament which had given his Majesty the Disposal of the Money before-mentioned, the Earl of *Orrery* had come to him, and putting him in mind how the *Chancellor* had rejected all Overtures which had been made to him of Benefit out of that Kingdom, (which Refusal, and many others, which shew how unsollicitous I have always been in the Way of getting, is not more known to any Man living than to the Lord-Lieutenant,) wished that he would move his Majesty to confer some Part of that Money upon him; which the Lord-Lieutenant very willingly did, and his Majesty as cheerfully granted: That a Letter was accordingly prepared, and his Majesty's Royal Signature procured by Mr. Secretary *Nicholas*, who was at the same Time commanded by the King, not to let me know of it; and to which purpose there was likewise a Clause in the Letter, whereby it was provided that I should have no Notice of it, which the Lord-Lieutenant said was by his Majesty's Direction, or with his Approbation; because it was said, that if I had Notice of it, I would be so foolish as to obstruct it my self: And that there was a Clause likewise in the said Letter, which directed the Payment of the said Money to my Heirs, Executors, or Assigns, if I should die before the Receipt thereof. Of all which being thus fully advertised by the Lord-Lieutenant, and of which till that Time I had not the least Notice or Imagination, I desired Mr. Secretary *Nicholas* to give me a Copy of that Letter, (which had been since passed as a Grant

unto

unto me under the Great Seal of *Ireland*, according to the Form of that Kingdom;) which he gave me, with a larger Account of many gracious Circumstances in the King's granting it, and the Obligation laid upon him of Secrecy, and the great Caution that was used that I might have no Notice of it. After I was informed of all this, I did not think there was any thing left for me to do, but to make my humble Acknowledgement to his Majesty for his Royal Bounty, and to take care for the receiving and transmitting the Money to me, and that I might receive the same very honestly: I did thereupon wait upon his Majesty with that Duty which became me; and his Majesty was graciously pleased to enlarge his Bounty with those Expressions of Favour, and the Satisfaction he had vouchsafed to take himself in the conferring his Donative, that my Joy was much greater from that Grace, than in the Greatness of the Gift.

At the very same Time, and the very Day that I received the Letter from the Lord-Lieutenant, the late Earl of *Portland* had come to me, and informed me of a Difference that was fallen out between the Lord *Lovelace* and Sir *Bulstrode Whitlocke*, upon a Defect in the Title to certain Lands purchased heretofore by the said Sir *Bulstrode Whitlocke* from the Lord *Lovelace*, and possess'd by the other for many Years: That the Lord *Lovelace* had been compelled, in the late ill Times, for the raising of Money to pay his Composition, and other necessary Uses, to make Sale of his Manor of *Blunsden* in the County of *Wilts*, and that Sir *Bulstrode Whitlocke* had purchased the same from him at a less Price than in truth it was worth: That though the Conveyances had been made and executed with all the Formality the Doctrine of that Time required; and that the Lord *Lovelace* had covenanted that his Son, who was then under Age, should join in the same Assurance when he should accomplish the Age of One and Twenty, which he had now newly done about the Time we are mentioning; and that the Lord *Lovelace* was resolved, though he was in his Person liable to the Covenant, to take Advantage of the Alteration of the Times, and to compel Sir *Bulstrode Whitlocke* to pay him more Money; or that his Son, who was Tenant in Remainder, should enter upon the Land. The Earl said, that he desired to make an End between them; and that the Lord *Lovelace* (whose great Friend he was) should receive some more Money, which his Condition required, without so great a Damage to Sir *Bulstrode Whitlocke*, as by the Law he would be liable to, however the other might suffer in his Person; that upon Conference between them, he found that the Manor of *Blunsden* was joined to some Land I had in *Wiltshire*, and would be very convenient to me, and therefore wished that I would purchase it at a just Value, which would produce a Satisfaction to both the other. This Proposition being made upon the very Day, as is said before, that I received the Letter from the Lord-Lieutenant of *Ireland*, by which it appeared that there was near as much Money already received for me as would pay for that Purchase, besides what would be more received within Six Months after, I wished the Earl of *Portland* to bring both the Persons concerned to me within Two Days, in which Time I would resolve what to do; nor did I need much Time to consider of it, the Person who then rented the Whole, and the Land itself, being very well known to me: so that when they all came to me at the Time appointed, after a very short Conference together we agreed upon the Purchase, and appointed the Writings to be prepared and executed as soon as might be; when I promised to pay more Money together than is usual in such Purchases, presuming I could not at all be disappointed in
the

the Return of that Sum of Money from *Ireland*, which was the sole Ground and Encouragement I had to undertake that Bargain: But the very next Letters I received from thence informed me, that the Necessities of that Kingdom had been such, that they could only return me Six Thousand Pounds, and that they had been forced to make use of the rest for the Publick, which would without doubt take care to repay me again within few Months; and so I found my self engaged in a Purchase which I could not retract, upon a Presumption of Money which in that manner I was disappointed of: And I have not only never since received a Penny of what was due upon the Second Payment, (and which I presumed would have been so certain, that I assigned it upon the Marriage of my Second Son to him as Part of his Portion,) but the Remainder of the first Sum was so borrowed or taken from me, that no Part of it hath been since paid to me or to my Use: By which, and the Inconveniencies and Damage which hath since ensued to me from thence, I may reasonably say, that I am yet a Loser, and involved in a great Debt by that signal Bounty of his Majesty, which I hope will in due Time be made good to me under so good a Security as an Act of Parliament; and I have great Reason to complain of those my very good Friends who first disposed his Majesty to that Act of Grace, and were not afterwards solicitous enough in their several Places to make it effectual to me. And this is a very true Account of all that Business, and of all the Money which I ever received from *Ireland*, with all the Circumstances thereof; which, I hope, in the Judgment of all impartial Men, will not reflect to the Prejudice of my Integrity and Honour.

THE Sixteenth Article is, *That I have deluded and betrayed his Majesty and the Nation, in all Foreign Treaties and Negotiations relating to the late War.*

I do heartily wish that those particular Treaties, and the Particulars in those Treaties, had been mentioned, wherein it was conceived that I had deluded and betrayed his Majesty, that I might have at large set down whatsoever I have known and done in those Treaties, and then it would easily have been made appear how far I have been from betraying and deluding him. It was never any Ambition of my own that brought me to have a Part in any Treaty; God knows, I heartily wished to have meddled in nothing but the Administration of that great Office the King thought fit to entrust me with; but his Majesty had so good an Opinion of me then, that he required and commanded my Service in many of those Treaties; and therefore it will be necessary for me, according to the Method I have hitherto used, to mention every particular Treaty that hath been entered into, since the Time of his Majesty's Return into *England*, and the Part that I have had in it: being as willing to be called to the strictest Account for any other Treaty he had made when he was Abroad, or for any other Counsel I have ever given him in my Life, Publick or Private; wherein, I doubt not, I shall be found to have behaved myself (according to the weak Abilities God Almighty hath given me) with Fidelity to my Master, and with all imaginable Affection to my Country, how unhappily soever I am represented.

The First Treaty was with the Crown of *Portugal*, in which I was none of the Commissioners who treated, and was only present when any Report was made by the Commissioners to the Council-Board, where all the Articles were debated; and I do not remember that there was any difference

ference of Opinion upon any of them; and that Treaty hath been generally held the best that hath been made with any Crown, the Merchants having thereby greater Advantages in Trade than they have in any other Place, besides many other great Benefits, with a great Enlargement of his Majesty's Empire.

The Second Treaty was with the *States of the United Provinces*, in which likewise I was none of the Commissioners who treated; but all that was by them transacted was still brought to the Council-Board, and debated there in his Majesty's Presence; in which the Rule by which his Majesty guided himself was, as I remember, that he would not remit any of those Concessions which had been formerly made by them in their last Treaty with *Cromwell*; and their Unwillingness to consent to that was the reason that their Ambassadors proceeded so slowly: And his Majesty had the less reason to be solicitous for Expedition, because the King of *France* had given him his Royal Word, and proposed it himself, that the Two Crowns might proceed in their several Treaties with the *Dutch* together, that so they might be brought to such good Conditions that they might live like good Neighbours with both the Crowns, which he observed they were not naturally inclined to do; and promised positively, that for his Part he would not conclude any thing with the *Dutch*, before he had entirely communicated the same to his Majesty. Notwithstanding which Engagement, *France* entered into and finished their Treaty, and in it made that secret Article which they declared afterwards to be the Ground and their Obligation to assist the *Dutch* in the ensuing War. However, his Majesty proceeded not till the *Holland* Ambassadors consented to all which had been granted before to *Cromwell*; which being done, the Peace was made and ratified on both Sides, and without doubt with more Advantage and Honour to the *English*, than ever had been provided by any former Treaty between the Crown of *England* and those States.

From the two Crowns of *Sweden* and *Denmark*, Ambassadors-Extraordinary arrived here shortly after his Majesty's Return, and the several Treaties were made with both those Crowns before the Departure of the Ambassadors; in neither of which Treaties I was a Commissioner, nor knew any thing that passed in either, but as it was represented at the Council-Board, and debated in his Majesty's Presence; nor did I ever hear that either of them was reckon'd a disadvantageous Treaty, both of them containing as much Benefit to the *English* as any Treaties which had been made before with those Crowns. It is very true, there were some unusual Expressions of Kindness and Friendship in the Treaty with *Denmark*; which, in respect of that King's being at that time in a very low Condition, under the disadvantageous Conditions of the Treaty of *Copenhagen* newly submitted to, and under almost as ill a Treaty extorted from him by the *Dutch*, and yet being in terrible Apprehension of some new Oppression from the one and from the other, the Ambassador did very earnestly solicit to have inserted, and were upon great Deliberation allowed and inserted by his Majesty's own particular Direction; in Consideration of the near Alliance in Blood between his Majesty and that King; and the Civilities and Obligations his Majesty had received from *Denmark*, during his Majesty's being in *Holland* after the Murther of his Father; and during his being in *Scotland*, when the King of *Denmark* sent him Horses, Arms and Ammunition; of which his Majesty had so great a Sense, that he was often heard to say, that if it had pleased God to have brought him Home before that disadvantageous Peace at *Copenhagen* had been made,

T

which

which was done by the Countenance of the *English* Ships, and the Threats of those who were then Ambassadors from the governing Power in *England*, that he would have done the best he could to have defended and protected him; and therefore he did very readily yield to that Article drawn by the Ambassador; his Majesty declaring at the same time, that he was very willing that those Princes who were Neighbours to *Denmark*, and from whom that Kingdom apprehended new Oppressions, should know his Majesty's Resolution to support that King, and to defend him from new Injuries, to which the Policy of his Government, as well as his Inclination, invited and obliged him: though it is very true, the King of *Denmark* did shortly after make very ill Returns to his Majesty for that his so signal Affection.

These were all the Treaties made by the King before the War with the *Dutch*, for there was very little Progress made either with *France* or *Spain* for the Reasons mentioned before, except only a short Treaty with the Elector of *Brandenburgh*; which Treaty, for the most Part, was particular with reference only to the Prince of *Orange*, his Majesty's Nephew, and for the better ordering of his Affairs; in which Treaty his Majesty likewise employed Five or Six of his Privy-Councillors; and the few Articles between his Majesty and that Elector in Point of State, were likewise transacted by them, and debated and considered at the Council-Board, and in which all Things were inserted for his Majesty's Benefit and Service; and if they had not been afterwards violated by the Elector, his Majesty had reaped much Fruit and Advantage even by that Treaty.

After the War was entered into with *Holland*, his Majesty sent Mr. *Coventry* to *Sweden*, and Sir *Gilbert Talbott* to *Denmark*, to dispose those two Crowns to a Confidence in each other, and then to dispose them both to adhere to his Majesty, or at least not to favour or assist the *Dutch*. The Treaty with *Sweden* succeeded to his Majesty's Wish, and was concluded in a League Defensive, very much to the King's Satisfaction, and with the full Approbation of the whole Board; that Crown having manifested so much Affection to his Majesty, and such an Inclination to an entire Conjunction with him, that upon very reasonable Conditions they would have been induced to have entered into a League Offensive, and even in the present War against the *Dutch*: In order to which they sent their Ambassadors hither, at the same time when Mr. *Coventry* returned, and they became the Mediators for the Peace; having first declared to his Majesty that, if the Treaty should prove ineffectual, the Crown of *Sweden* would immediately join with his Majesty in the War against the *Dutch*. What became of the other Treaty with *Denmark* is publicly known, his Majesty having declared to all the World how perfidiously he was treated by the *Dane*.

There remains only One other Treaty to be mentioned, which is the last with the *Dutch*, upon which the Peace was made; and therefore it will be necessary to set down the Inducements to that Treaty, the whole Progress and Conclusion of it: By all which it will easily appear that his Majesty was neither betrayed or deluded in it; or if he were, that it was not done by me. After so many Encounters and various Successes in the War, which had been carried on with a much greater Expence than his Majesty at his first Entrance into it was persuaded it would cost him, when he saw the Strength and Power of the *Dutch* so much increased by the Conjunction of *France* and *Denmark*, which supplied them with Money, Ships, and (what they had more wanted) with Men as many as they desired;

fired; and that all the Propositions he could make to *Spain* could not induce them to enter into such an Alliance with him as might embark them against *France*; notwithstanding it was evident to all but themselves, that the *French* resolved to break the Peace with them, having at that time published those Declarations which they afterwards made the Ground of the War: His Majesty clearly discerned, that the *Dutch* grew less weary of the War than they had before seemed to have been; and that they would be able, with that Assistance and Conjunction, to continue the War with less Inconvenience than his Majesty was like to do. He had found it necessary for the streightning the Trade of the Enemy (the depriving them of which could only induce the *Dutch* to desire a Peace, and which he could not do by the Strength of his own Ships, which were still kept together to encounter their Fleet) to grant as many Commissions upon Letters of Mart to private Men of War as desired the same, and with such strict Orders and Limitations as are necessary in those Cases; and he found indeed the Advantage very great, in the Damage those Men of War did to the Enemy, which was considerable, and gave them great Trouble: On the other side, the common Seamen chose much rather to go on board those Men of War; where their Profit out of their Shares of the Booty was greater, and their Hazards much less, than in the King's Ships, where they got only Blows without Booty, though their Pay and Provisions were much greater than they had been in any former Times; so that when the Royal Fleet was to be sent out, there was greater difficulty in procuring Seamen and Mariners to man it. And then, whereas the Advancement of Trade was made the great End of the War, it was now found necessary to suppress all Trade, that there might be Mariners enough to furnish the Ships for the carrying on the War; and this Inconvenience produced another Mischief, for by the great Diminution and even Suppression of Trade, there was likewise so great a Fall in the Customs, Excise, and all other Branches of the King's Revenue, that it was evident enough that his Majesty would have very little to carry on the War, but what should arise by Imposition in Parliament upon the People; who already complained loudly of the Decay of their Rents, of the small and low Prices which their Commodities yielded by the Cessation of Trade, and especially by the carrying out of all the Money in Specie from the several Counties, to *London*, for the carrying on of the War; and the Parliament it self appeared to be so weary of it, that instead of granting a new Supply proportionable to the Charge, they fell upon Expedients to raise Money by Sale of Part of the King's Revenue, which was already too small to support the ordinary and necessary Expence of the Crown: But above all, his Majesty was most discouraged by the extreme Licence of the Seamen in general; but especially of those who were called Privateers, set out in the particular Ships of War upon Adventure, who made no Distinction between Friends and Foes; but, as if the Sea had been their own Quarters, they siezed upon all Ships which came within their view, and either pillaged them entirely and so dismiss'd them, (which they usually did to those which they foresaw would be delivered by the Course of Justice) or else brought them into the Harbours after they had taken from them what they best liked. And then the formal Proceedings in the Court of Admiralty were so dilatory, and involved in so many Appeals, that the Prosecution of Justice for Injuries received grew as grievous as the Injury it self; which drew a universal Clamour from all Nations, that without being Parties to the War they were all treated as Enemies. *France* had made the Damage they had this way received, and the Interruption
of

of their Trade a great Part of their Quarrel, and one Ground of their Conjunction with the *Dutch*. From *Spain*, which really wished better to Us than to our Enemies, the Complaints were as great; that their whole Trade was destroyed; their Ships of *Flanders*, which supplied *Spain* with what they wanted for themselves, and with what was necessary for their Trade and Intercourse with the *Indies*, were all taken as *Dutch*, because it was very hard to distinguish them by their Language; which was likewise the Case of all the *Hans Towns*, which made grievous Complaints, and had, without doubt, received great Damage. Those Provinces of *Italy*, whose Dominions reached to the Sea, as the two Republicks of *Venice* and *Genoa*, and the Duke of *Florence*, expostulated very grievously for their several Ships taken by those free Booters of *Scotland* and of *Ireland*, both which Nations enriched themselves very much upon such Depredations; and how much soever the Royal Navy was every Day weakened, the Number of the Men of War wonderfully increased: so that those kind of Ships, of *England*, *Scotland* and *Ireland*, cover'd the whole Ocean; and of those Ships which were taken and carried into *Scotland* or *Ireland* (in *England* there were many Re-deliveries) it was observed, that there were *Vestigia nulla retrorsum*. Even *Sweden* it self, with whom a new stricter Alliance was then enter'd into, with as severe Restrictions to that Licence of the Men of War as could be contrived for the Liberty and Security of the Trade of that Crown, complained exceedingly of the Violation of all those Concessions and Provisions, and that their Ships were every Day taken and plundered. And this universal Complaint began to awaken all Princes to a Jealousy, that the *English* endeavoured to restrain all Trade, till they could make themselves the intire Masters of it. And it is very true, in the first Entrance of the War there had been many unskilful Expressions, even in the Parliament as well as in the frequent Discourses of Parliament-Men, that by this War, and by suppressing the *Dutch*, (of which they made not the least doubt) the King would be able to give the Law to all the Trade of the World, and that no Ships should pass the Sea without paying some Tribute to *England*; which Liberty and Rashness in Discourse, made a great Impression upon those who wished any Mischief to the *Dutch*, till they saw what Danger might ensue to themselves by the Success of the *English*; and thereupon wished that they might break themselves upon each other, without Advantage to either Party: And this general Temper and Complaint made the deeper Impression in his Majesty, by his discerning an extreme Difficulty, if not an Impossibility, to give a just Remedy to it; and consequently, that he should be shortly looked upon as a common Enemy. He had taken very great Pains, upon deliberate Consultations, to suppress that odious Irregularity and destructive Licence that was practised amongst the Seamen, and had in many particular Cases himself examined the Excess, and caused exemplary Justice to be done upon the Offenders, and Restitution to be made of what had been taken, at least of what was left; for no Justice could preserve the injured Persons from being Losers: He granted such Rules and Privileges, and Protection to the Ports of *Flanders*, and to others of his Allies, as themselves desired, and looked upon as their full Security; but then he quickly found, that from those very Ports, and in those very Ships which enjoyed those Privileges, the Trade of the *Dutch* was driven on: So that it was evident enough, that by that Liberty which other Nations thought themselves in Justice intitled to, if not restrained, the *Hollanders* themselves would be easily able to carry on their whole Trade

Trade in the Ships of *Flanders*, *Hamborough*, and the other Free Towns, or in their own Ships owned by the other; and that the Restraint would be likewise impossible, without a total Suppression of the Men of War, and a Revocation of all Commissions granted to any of them: which must likewise be attended with the Freedom and Security of Trade to all his Majesty's Enemies. In the last Encounter at Sea, the *Prince Royal*, and Three others of his Majesty's Navy, had been lost; and another (the *London*) had been burnt in the River by the Negligence of the Seamen; for there was never any Discovery made, that there was any Purpose or Malice in it: The *French* had obliged themselves, that the Duke *de Beaufort*, Admiral of *France*, should, with the whole Fleet under his Command, amounting to Eighteen good Ships, join with the *Dutch*; and the King of *Denmark* was likewise engaged to send all his greatest Ships, which were Ten or a Dozen, in order to the like Conjunction. So that his Majesty clearly discerned that the Enemy would be much superior to him in Strength and Power, though he should have been able to have mann'd and set out all his Royal Navy; which he very well foresaw he should not be able to do, both for want of Money and want of Seamen, who were already in great Disorder and Mutiny for want of their Pay, of which there was indeed a great Arrear due to them; and which was worse, there was grown such an Animosity amongst the principal Officers of the Fleet between themselves, that the whole Discipline was corrupted; so that it was hard to resolve into what Hands to put the chief Government thereof, if it could have been made ready. Upon which, and the whole State of Affairs, upon Deliberation and frequent Consultation with the principal Officers of the Sea, and such others whose Experience in such Matters rendered them most capable to give Advice, his Majesty found it most counsellable to resolve to make a defensive War the next Year, and to lay up all his great Ships; and to have some Squadrons of the lighter Vessels continue in several Quarters assigned to them, which should be ready to take any Advantages which should be offered; and that there should be likewise ready in the River another good Squadron of Ships against the End of the Summer, which being ready to join with those which lay out, when the Enemy was weary and their Ships foul, should be able to take many notable Advantages upon them; of which they who advised it were so confident, that they did believe this Defensive Way thus ordered and prosecuted, would prove a greater Damage to the Enemy in their Trade, and all other Respects, than they had ever yet undergone. And in all this Counsel and Resolution I had no other Part than being present; and not understanding the Subject Matter of the Debate, I thought myself not to be able to answer any of the Reasons which had been alledged.

These Considerations, upon a full Survey of his ill Condition at home and abroad, induced his Majesty to wish that there were a good End of the War; which Inclination his Majesty vouchsafed to inform me of, well knowing that I would be very glad to contribute all I could to it, as the Thing I desired most in this World, and which I thought would prove the greatest Benefit to the King and Kingdom; and his Majesty likewise told me, that he found all those who had been most forward and impatient to enter into this War, were now weary of it, and would be glad of a Peace: So that there remained now nothing more to do, than for his Majesty to advise with whom he thought fit, (for there seemed many Reasons to conceal both the Inclination to Peace, and the Resolution not to set out a Summer Fleet, from being publickly known,) what Method to observe, and what

Expedients to make use of, for the better securing this wish'd-for Peace, without appearing to be too solicitous or importunate for it, or so weary of the War as in Truth he was; and to this Consultation his Majesty was pleased to call together with his Royal Brother, Prince *Rupert*, the General, the Lord-Treasurer, my self, and those other honourable Persons with whom he used to advise in his most secret and most important Affairs.

That which occurred first was, to consider whether there were any Hope of dividing the *French* from the *Dutch*; upon which Supposition the Prospect was not unpleasant, the War with one of them being hopefully enough to be pursued; the Conjunction was only formidable: And to this Purpose several Attempts were made both in *France* and *Holland*; both Sides being equally resolved not to separate from each other, till a joint Peace should be made with *England*, though they both owned a Jealousy of each other; Those of *Holland* having a terrible Apprehension and Fore-sight of the King of *France's* Designs upon *Flanders*, which would make his Greatness too near a Neighbour to their Territories; besides that the Logick of his Demands upon the Devolution and Nullity of the former Treaty upon the Marriage, was equally applicable to their whole Interest, as it was to their Demands from the King of *Spain*: And *France*, upon all the Attacks they had made both in *France* with the Ambassador there, and in *Holland* by their own Ambassador, found clearly, that they were to expect no Assistance from the *Dutch* in their Designs, and that at least they wished them ill Success, and would probably contribute to it upon the first Occasion; and this made them willing to determine their so strict Alliance, which was already very chargeable to them, and not like to be attended with any notable Advantage, except in weakening an Ally from whom they probably promised themselves more good. However, neither the one nor the other could be induced to enter into any Treaty a-part, tho' they both seemed willing and desirous of a Peace; in order to which, the *Dutch*, through the *Swedes* Ambassadors Hands, had writ to the King, to offer a Treaty in any such Neutral Place as his Majesty should make choice of; professing that they should make no Scruple of sending their Ambassadors directly to his Majesty, but that their Conjunction with the other Two Crowns, which required a Neutral Place, would not admit that Condescension; and at the same Time they intimated to the *Swedes* Ambassadors, that the King of *France* would not send his Ambassadors into *Flanders*, or any Place of the King of *Spain's* Dominions; and therefore wished that his Majesty would make choice of *Disseldorp*, *Cullen*, or *Francfort*, or *Hamborough*, or any other Place which his Majesty should think more convenient than the other, under that Exception: All which Places, and in Truth any other out of the King of *Spain's* Dominions, were at such a Distance, (the Winter being now near over,) that there could be no reasonable Expectation of the Fruit of the Treaty in time to prevent more Acts of Hostility.

About this Time the Earl of *St. Albans* having been sent into *England* by the Queen-Mother upon her own particular Affairs, Monsieur *De Ruvigny* did write to him, that that Court did earnestly desire a Peace; and that, if he were in *France*, he did believe some Expedient might be found that would produce the same; and he continued for many Weeks together to write very earnestly to the Earl of *St. Albans* to come into *France* with Authority to treat and conclude a Peace, and that it might be made before suspected. All which Letters the Earl shewed to his Majesty. Monsieur *De Ruvigny* was a Person very well known to the King, and many others

others in the Court, to be too wise a Man to write upon such a Subject, and in such a Manner, without very good Authority; and that he was likewise a Man of Honour, and would not suffer himself to be made use of upon any unworthy Design; and therefore his Majesty concluded, that it would be fit that the Earl of St. *Albans* should transport himself into *France*; who having dispatched all the Business for which he was sent by the Queen, his Return could administer no Cause of Jealousy to any; nor had he so much as a Letter of Credit from the King, and only had Direction to understand from Monsieur *De Ruigny*, upon what Ground he had so earnestly invited him over, and to receive any Proposition he or any Body else should offer in order to Peace, which he should transmit to his Majesty, and expect an Answer; with a positive negative Instruction, that if any Proposition should be made to him to oblige his Majesty to assist the *French* against *Flanders*, he should utterly reject it.

At the same Time, the Baron *De Issola*, who was Envoy from the Emperor, and a much more dexterous Man than the *Spanish* Ambassador, and so more relied upon in *Madrid* as well as *Vienna*, in those Affairs which concerned their joint Interest, pretended to have received Letters from *Holland*, by the Consent and with the Privy of *De Witt*, that they had there a great Mind to Peace; and that if *De Witt* (who was looked upon as the only Man that opposed it) might receive any Assurance of the Goodwill and Protection of the King, he would be willing to negotiate the Peace, whether *France* should be willing to it or no; and the Baron (who had nothing more to solicit on the Emperor's behalf) offered immediately to take his leave and return to *Brussels*, and from thence he would go *incognito* to the *Hague* and confer with *De Witt*, and would thereupon give his Majesty Advertisement what he might depend upon. The King would have thought the better of any Peace that had been procured without the Interposition of *France*, and therefore willingly consented to his Journey; and gave him leave to assure *De Witt*, that he should find all possible Goodwill and Friendship from his Majesty, and that his Majesty desired nothing more than a just and an honourable Peace, and upon such Conditions as might make it lasting.

Whilst these Matters were in Agitation in *France* and in *Holland*, the *Swedes* Ambassadors earnestly solicited for an Answer to the Letter they presented to his Majesty from the *States*, concerning a Neutral Place; which put his Majesty to another Deliberation. Not to return any Answer, would be interpreted a Refusal of the Treaty, and so make his Majesty appear to all Christian Princes to be better pleased with the War. To accept of any of those Places insinuated from the *Dutch*, would be against his Dignity, in so far condescending to the unreasonable Imposition of the King of *France*; and yet to nominate any Place in *Flanders* for the Treaty, after *France* had so positively declared itself, would be interpreted both by *France* and *Holland* as a Rejection of the Treaty, at least would make *France* less solicitous for a good End of it. When his Majesty called that Committee of the Board to consult upon some Expedient in this Affair, he proposed himself one Expedient, which I am sure I had not heard of before; which was, to make choice of the *Hague* for the Place to treat in. The Condescension to *Holland*, in sending his Ambassadors to treat in their own Province, was not, upon a Disquisition of it, thought to be of that Importance, as to neglect the Benefits and Conveniencies which might reasonably be expected from the having it in that Place. The People were not only generally very weary of the War, and desirous of a Peace, but
the

the *States* themselves were very much divided, and *De Witt*, had been exposed to many Difficulties and Reproaches, under the Character of being the sole Person who desired the Prosecution of the War; and he had prevailed most, by taking upon him to assure the *States*, that the King had no Thoughts of Peace, but only laboured to separate *France* from them, and divide them amongst themselves. There could not be a greater Manifestation of his Majesty's ardent Desire of Peace, than by offering to send his Ambassadors to the Place where the Body of the *States* themselves resided, and who would be the only Judges of the Reasonableness of what his Majesty should propose, and by being upon the Place might give all Expedition to the Work: Besides, that all other Princes concern'd had their Ministers likewise there; and therefore if his Majesty's Overture in this Particular should be rejected, all the World would conclude that the *Dutch* would not endure so much as to hear of Peace. And upon these Reasons the Resolution was taken to name the *Hague* for the Place of the Treaty, and his Majesty's Letters were dispatched accordingly.

The first News we heard from *Paris* and the *Hague*, after the Earl of *St. Albans* being arrived there, and the Baron *De Iffola* at *Brussels*, was a great Complaint, that the King had sent the Baron *De Iffola* privately to the *Hague* with Overtures of Peace; but especially with design to divide *Holland* from *France*, and to perswade them to break their Alliance with them; in which there were some particular Expressions which his Majesty had in truth used to the Baron *De Iffola*, and many others which he had never used. The King had reason to conclude from hence, that *De Witt* was never to be treated withal privately; and that the Baron *De Iffola* was not to be trusted, he having perswaded and prevailed with his Majesty to give him leave to speak with *De Witt* upon some Letters he had shewed the King from Monsieur *Friquett*, the Emperor's Envoy at the *Hague*, a Gentleman not unknown to his Majesty, and of a very clear Reputation; wherein there was mention of a Discourse made by *De Witt* to him, which might very well encourage the King to give that in Charge to the Baron which his Majesty had in truth commended to him: Nor in truth had it been material, if he had said no more than his Majesty gave him leave to do; which yet he promised not to mention, except he clearly discerned the other to be very willing to deal as freely with his Majesty; but it plainly appeared that the Baron had far exceeded his Commission, and said many Things for which he had not any Power, and which in truth had never passed in Discourse between the King and him. And as the King of *France* had always expressed the greatest Prejudice, and the most bitter Jealousy, from the Time that the Baron was designed for *England*, as a Person who delighted in nothing so much as in puzzling and perplexing, and creating Intricacies in all Treaties in which he had ever been engaged, which had been many in several Courts of *Christendom*; so indeed his Parts were most proportioned for embroiling and for preventing any Conclusion, in which he gave himself leave to say and do any thing which he thought would contribute to his End, without the least Consideration of Ingenuity or Sincerity in the Matter; though otherwise it cannot be denied that he was a Man of great Parts, and of a universal Understanding in the Affairs of *Christendom*.

At the same time the King of *France* complained of the Authority given by his Majesty to the Baron *De Iffola*, we found in the *Dutch* printed *Gazette* the Copy of a Letter written then by the King of *France* himself to the *States*; in which he informed them of the Earl of *St. Albans* being
newly

newly come to him with Propositions from the King of *England* in order to Peace; and that he had a Plenipotentiary Commission to treat and conclude, mentioning some of the Conditions he had offered; and therefore desired that they would arm their Ambassadors in *France* to join in the Treaty. This gave his Majesty great Offence, and just cause to suspect that whatever Pretences *France* had made, it did not at all desire the Peace; and he had the more reason to complain of this Injury, because there was not the least Colour or Ground of Truth in the relation, the Earl of St. *Albans* having not any thing like a Commission; nor as he protested upon this Occasion, (whereof he had likewise taken Notice at *Paris*, and complained before he could have any Advertisement from *England*) had he ever pretended to have the least Power from his Majesty; nor had he ever mentioned any of those Particulars to any Person which were so formally inserted in that King's Letter to the *States*: And his Majesty was the more confirmed in his Belief that *France* would not contribute to the Peace, because they did at this very Time, with equal Passion to *De Wit* himself, oppose the Treaty at the *Hague*; against which they could have no reason to except, if they had a mind to the Peace, unless they hoped by the Trick that is mentioned before, to have got the Treaty to *Paris* by a Commission to the Earl of St. *Albans*, which they had tried all the ways they could to obtain, and his Majesty had as positively refused to grant, and then resolved to insist on the *Hague*, or upon some Place in *Flanders*, let the Success be what it would.

During this Agitation, an Express was sent over from the Earl of St. *Albans*, with two Papers which he had received from Monsieur *De Lyonne*, and both in his own Hand, which Originals were sent to the King; the one contained a Proposition for the Peace, that there should be no mention of the Charges of the War, or the Damages received by it on either Side; but that it should be in his Majesty's Choice, whether all Things should remain in the state it was at present, either Side to keep what it had taken, and were possess'd of by reason of the War; or that both Sides should come to an Accompt, and either be repaired by the other for the Damages it had sustained; and that after his Majesty had made his Election of those two Particulars, from thence the Peace should be observed between the King and the *Dutch*, according to the last Treaty which had been made at *London* after his Majesty's Return: The other Paper was a Proposition made to his Majesty, that he would promise under his Hand that he would not, during the Space of a Year to come, enter into any Treaty to the Prejudice of *France*, nor give any Assistance against *France* during that Year, this Overture being made about the Beginning of *March*; and in Consideration hereof, the King of *France* would restore the Island of St. *Christophers*, which he had newly taken from the *English*, and would undertake that the *Dutch* should consent to the Peace upon the Conditions formerly mentioned; and that the Treaty should be, if his Majesty desired it, at *Dover* or *Canterbury*, since it would not be possible to persuade *De Wit* ever to consent that it should be at the *Hague*, which he looked upon as a Design only to countenance the Party of his Enemies; and at the same time the *States* writ again to the King, and offered to treat at *Dover* or *Canterbury*.

Though his Majesty had, in all his Answers to the *Dutch*, demanded Satisfaction for the Damages he had sustained, and for the Charge of the War; and made little doubt, if *France* had not entred into that Conjunction, that they would have been induced to have made some Compen-

sation towards it; yet the Case was now altered, and they thought themselves by the new Alliances to stand upon the Advantage Ground, so that his Majesty found any Demand of that kind would not be submitted to; nor in Truth, had the like been insisted upon in any Treaties of this Age, after the longest or sharpest War that had been made. Hereupon, after full Deliberation, his Majesty was well content to accept of the Propositions made by the King of *France* for the Peace, and made Choice of the First Alternative, that both Parties should be contented to enjoy what they had got without any Accompt, the *Dutch* having lost very much more than the *English*; and we having taken from them in *Guinea*, and upon that Coast, more important Places than they had taken from Us: and the Restitution of *St. Christophers* by the King of *France*, put his Majesty into the same Condition in his Plantations in the *West-Indies*, as he had been before the War.

When his Majesty thought that all Things upon the Matter had been adjusted, and cared the less where the Treaty should be; and having sent such an Answer into *France* as was punctually agreeable to what had been thence desired; he received another Dispatch from thence with infinite Excuses, and Protestations of Sincerity, that the *Dutch* had expressly refused to consent to a Peace, except the King would remit and part with the Island of *Polaroone* in the *East-Indies*; an Island which had been formerly taken by the *Dutch* from the *English* with very foul Circumstances, and the Re-delivery whereof was promised by them in their Treaty with *Cromwell*, and again renewed in their last Treaty with the King, and his Majesty had sent Ships thither to receive it; which not being delivered upon Pretence of want of some Formality in the demanding, it was one of the Grounds of the present War, as an Indignity and Breach of Faith towards his Majesty: though they protested that it was only the Fault of their Governour in those Parts, who for want of an Order from the *East-India* Company, though he did receive the Order of the *States-General*, had not refused, but delay'd its Delivery; and that that and all other Orders that could be required, were again renewed, and already sent thither, and they were confident the Place was by that Time given up. It was alledged by the King of *France*, that the *Dutch* had always declared to him, in all the Discourses which had been between them of a Treaty, that they would never restore *Polaroone*: And Monsieur de *Lyonne* protested, that he had never known that the Restitution thereof was comprehended in the last Treaty, but conceived that it would fall within the Alternative, if the King should make Choice of that, which he had done, or otherwise would fall into the Accompt; and concluded, with a very earnest Desire, that the King would rather yield in that Particular, than break the Treaty for an Island which was nothing worth for the present, nor could be made valuable in less than seven Years; with a Protestation still, that he would do all that was in his Power to persuade the *Dutch* to part with *Polaroone*; but if they should deny to do it, he could not separate himself from them upon that Point, since they had still mentioned it as a Condition: but if his Majesty would yield in that Particular, all Difficulties should be removed, and the Treaty concluded without any new Obstruction. This unreasonable Litigation, and the receding from what had been so fully undertaken before, removed all Confidence from his Majesty of the sincere Intentions of *France*; nor could he foresee what other new Scruples would arise from the one Hand, and be admitted by the other. However, after a full Deliberation with his Council upon the whole State of his Affairs, and after having commu-

nicated

nicated to them all that had passed, he did resolve not to reject the Treaty, but was contented that *Breda* should be the Place; not thinking it fit, for many Reasons, to bring the Treaty to *Dover* or *Canterbury*, to give the Enemy that Advantage if it should prove ineffectual, that it should be broken in his own Dominions; or to make other Advantages by Infusions to the People, who were generally more dissatisfied than they had reason to be: And thereupon his Majesty named the Lord *Hollis*, and Mr. *Henry Coventry* of his Majesty's Bed-Chamber, for his Ambassadors in that Treaty, Men very well qualified for the Service, who were dispatched to *Breda* as soon as was possible, which was about the Beginning of *May*; *France* having promised, that the Fleet under the Command of the Duke de *Beaufort* should remain in the Port, and that he would use his utmost Power to dispose the *Dutch*, in the Entrance into the Treaty, to consent to a Cessation, that so there might be no more Acts of Hostility on either Side, until it might appear what Success the Treaty was like to have towards a Peace: And concerning the Business of *Polaroone*, he gave them Charge to insist upon the Delivery, and sent to the *East-India* Company, who had the sole Interest in that Island, to send their Deputies to the Treaty, who should be privy to all that should be treated upon that Affair, and who might propose or accept whatsoever they thought best for themselves; towards the obtaining whereof, *France* was so fully engaged to use their utmost Interposition.

What passed during the Treaty is known to so many, that I need not mention it here, every Dispatch from the Ambassadors being read and debated at the Council-Board; and when such Difficulties did arise that the Ambassadors would not take upon them to make any Conclusion without a particular Communication of the Temper and Disposition and Resolution of all the Persons concerned, they thought fit that one of themselves (the Lord Ambassador *Coventry*) should attend his Majesty, being obliged to return with his Majesty's Answer within so many Days; and as soon as he arrived, he gave his Majesty a full Account, before the whole Council-Board, of all that had passed in the Treaty; That the *Dutch* behaved themselves very insolently, and that the Authority of *De Witt* was so great at the *Hague* with the *States*, that no Body durst oppose any thing he advised; That the *Dane*, by his Instigation, had made Demands of a very insolent Nature; That they believed that the *French* Ambassadors had behaved themselves very well, and done all that was in their Power to do, and had restrained the *Dutch* from their Insolence by Threats and Menaces, which they likewise used toward the *Dane*: In fine, he read all the Articles which were concluded between them; with all those which remained undetermined and unconsented to, on either Side; with what the *French* Ambassadors resolved to persuade and reduce the *Dutch* to consent to yield to, or to declare against them in their Master's Name. Upon which Report, every particular Article was at large debated at the Board, which took up many Days. The Ambassador said, there was not the least Hope of having *Polaroone* restored to the *English*; that they said it was contained in that Alternative which the King had made choice of; and when it was replied to them, that the Words of that Alternative clearly determined the contrary, for that either Side was to remain possessed of what they had got by reason of the War, which could not be applied to this Island, which they had unjustly taken and usurped so many Years before; and that they were obliged, by the last Treaty, to restore it, so that the War had no Operation upon that; to this they

they answer'd, that they had, according to the Treaty, sent Orders for the Re-delivery of it, and that they believed it had been delivered accordingly; and that upon the News of the War, their Subjects had re-taken it again, which would bring it within the very Letter of the Alternative: And this our *East-India* Company was so far from contradicting, that they believed it to be true, and had shewed me, before the Treaty began, a Letter they had received from one of their Factors in the *Indies*, that there was a Report there that the *Dutch* had delivered up *Polaroone* to those who were sent to receive it, and that shortly after that they had taken it from them again; and therefore they desired that a special Article might be inserted in the Treaty, whereby the *Dutch* might be obliged to give it up again, if they had in truth so indirectly delivered it, that they might again re-possess themselves of it; which could not but be understood to be a plain Violation of their Publick Faith, or a vile Artifice to elude it. The Ambassadors replied, that if it had been in truth delivered by them, tho' so indirectly taken, they could not insist upon it, but allow it to be in the Alternative; they desired only that it might be inserted in the Article, that if in truth it had never been delivered, they should be obliged to do what so long since they should have done. The *Dutch* answered, That the End of this Treaty was to establish a firm Peace, and therefore they would admit of no doubtful Expressions which might create future Disputes. The Ambassadors said, It was very evident, and the *French* Ambassadors had acknowledged the same to them, that they were resolved never to part with the Island; so that there remained no more to be considered upon that Particular, but whether upon the Refusal of *Polaroone*, the War should be continued. The *East-India* Company were sent for to deliver their Opinion; and they very frankly declared, that they believed a Peace to be very necessary for the Kingdom, and therefore would not that the War should be continued upon any particular Interest of theirs; and it was evident enough, that if the War continued, their whole *East-India* Trade must be destroyed, the *Dutch* being so much superior in Shipping, and all Kind of Strength, in those Parts. Hereupon the King resolved to consent to their keeping of *Polaroone*; and I do not know that there was one Man at the Board of another Opinion. To conclude, after a long Debate for so many Days upon every Particular, the King resolved, with the Concurrence of the whole Board, (one or two Persons only excepted,) to consent to the Peace upon such Concessions and Provisions as the *French* Ambassadors had obliged themselves to bring the *Dutch* to consent to; and thereupon the Ambassador returned with full Power, and in a short Time after that Peace was concluded and published. And therefore, I cannot understand how his Majesty could be deluded or betrayed in that Treaty, which passed with such a full Examination and Disquisition; and in all which Debates, his Majesty himself had taken the Pains to discourse more, and to enlarge himself in the Answer of all those Objections which were foreseen, than I had ever known him do upon any other Article.

It is very true, that I had been commanded by the King to write most of the Letters and Directions which had been sent to the Earl of *St. Albans* from the Time of his going over, concerning the Treaty, his Lordship having (I presume by the same Direction) directed most of his Letters to me; and most of the Dispatches to the Ambassadors were likewise prepared by me, they being by their Instructions (without my Desire or Privy) to transmit their Account to one of the Secretaries, or to my self: But it is as true, that I never received Letter from either of them, but it

was

was read entirely in his Majesty's Presence to those Lords of the Council who attended, where Directions were given what Answer should be returned; and I never did return any Answer to either of them, without having first read it to the Council, or having first sent it to one of the Secretaries to be read to his Majesty; and I can with a very good Conscience protest to all the World, that I never did the least Thing, or gave the least Advice relating to this War, or relating to the Peace, which I would not have done if I had been expiring, and to have given an Account thereof to God Almighty that Minute: And as his Majesty prudently and piously and passionately desired to put an End to that War; so no Man appeared more delighted with the Peace when it was concluded than his Majesty himself did; though, as far as I could make any Judgment of the Publick Affections, the Publication of that Peace was attended with the most universal Joy and Acclamation of the whole Nation, that can be imagined: Nor is it easy to forget the general Consternation that the City and the People of all Conditions were in, when the *Dutch* came into the River as high as *Chatbam*; and when the Distemper in the Court itself was so great, that many Persons of Quality and Title in the Galleries and Privy-Lodgings very indecently every Day vented their Passions in bitter Execrations against those who had first counselled and brought on the War, wishing that an End were put to it by any Peace; some of which Persons, within very few Days after, as bitterly inveighed against the Peace, and against the Promoters of it. But I am so far yet from repenting or being ashamed of the Part I had in it, that I look upon it as a great Honour, that the last Service performed for his Majesty, was the sealing the Proclamations, and other Instruments for the Conclusion and Perfection of that Peace, the Great Seal of *England* being that very Day sent for, and taken from me.

THE Seventeenth and Last Article is, *That I was a principal Author of that fatal Counsel of Dividing the Fleet about June 1666.*

How far I have always been from giving Advice in the Prosecution of the War either by Land or Sea, (except by being present at some of the Debates,) I have at large set down before; I never in my Life having pretended, either in the Time when I served his late Majesty during the War, or in this King's Time, to understand any thing of that Affair: But when I have been present in Counsels of that Nature, I have always governed myself by their Opinions who had the greatest Reputation of Skill in that Profession; and I never presumed less in my Life to give an Advice, than I did in this Particular concerning the Division of the Fleet; and I should make a full Answer to this Charge, if I should say no more, than that I am not guilty of it. But since it hath made so much Noise, to the Disadvantage of the King, and of the Conduct of his Affairs, and that no Care hath been taken to inform Men of the whole Carriage in that Particular; I will, as I have done at large to the other Articles, for his Majesty's Honour, and for the Vindication of those of his Council who were present in those Debates, (how unjust soever many of them have been to me,) set down very particularly all that I know of that Matter, and how the Fleet came to be divided; upon the View of which, I am of Opinion, what Misfortune soever attended it, no Man will have Cause to be ashamed of any Fault he committed in it. From the Time that his Majesty resolved to send Prince *Rupert* and the General with a joint Power and Authority to command the Fleet, there was Cause enough to apprehend that there would

not have been so good an Accord between them as the conducting so great a Service required; and I was then thought to have so good an Interest in both of them, that his Majesty commanded me to use the utmost Endeavours to dispose them to a good Understanding towards each other; and I believe they will both confess, that I performed all the Offices I could, and with some Success, to that good End: And I was the more solicitous in it, because I found that the Prince was much unsatisfied with the Resolution his Majesty had taken, that they should both go in one and the same Ship; and that his Highness was very desirous to be in a Ship by himself, and even to Command a Part of the Fleet upon any Enterprize that should offer it self, separated from the other: And there was too general an Opinion, from what Ground I know not, even at the Time when our Fleet was ready, and when the two Generals went to it, that the *Dutch* were not in any Degree ready to come out; that the greatest Ships had not taken in their Provisions, and that they had not Men enough to man the Fleet; and that they had no Design to come out of their Port till the Duke *de Beaufort* should be ready upon the Coast to join with them; which Fleet was then at *Brest*, and in great Readiness. I had no Part in managing the Intelligence, nor in truth so much as a Correspondence by Letter at that Time, with any Man in *France*, or *Holland*. The Two Generals were not many Days at Sea, when my Lord *Arlington* informed his Majesty and my Lords, that he had received Intelligence from a good Hand, that the *Dutch* were in no Degree ready to come out with their Fleet; and that the Duke *de Beaufort* on such a Day of the Month had all his Fleet ready, and his Men on Board, to take the first Opportunity of the Wind to set Sail from *Brest*; that the Wind had been fair these Two last Days, and therefore that it might be presumed that he was by that Time at Sea, and making his Course for *Holland*. Whereupon it was consulted, whether any Order should be sent to the Fleet, that Prince *Rupert* with Part of it might bend his Course towards *Brest*, whilst the General with the other Part waited the *Hollanders* Motion. There had been a long Prospect and frequent Debates upon this Contingency, and how advantageous a Thing it would prove, if we could have timely Advertisment of the Duke *de Beaufort's* Motion, that a Part of the Fleet might be sent to encounter him before his Conjunction with the *Dutch*; and to that purpose the Lord *Arlington* had taken all the Pains, he could to get particular Intelligence of the Motion of that Fleet. When this Intelligence was communicated, some were of Opinion that his Majesty should send present Orders to the Generals, that Prince *Rupert* should with such a Number of Ships as they should think fit bend his Course as is before-mentioned. The late Lord Treasurer and I were present at this Debate; and though we seldom offered Advice in such Cases, yet being now both of one Opinion, we did desire the King, that he would not take upon himself to send positive Orders in an Affair of such Moment, upon an Intelligence that might not be true; tho' we believed it to be very probable, that the Generals were like every Day to know more of the Motion of the Enemy than we could do: And therefore we humbly offered it to his Majesty, whether it might not be fit in this Case, to send some of the Council then present, and who had seen the Intelligence, and heard the whole Debate, presently to the Fleet, to inform the Generals of what his Majesty had heard, and of the Considerations which had been thereupon; and if they had received no Advertisment to the contrary, and upon Conference together, thought fit to divide the Fleet, and that Prince *Rupert* should set Sail in order to engage the Duke

Duke *de Beaufort*, his Majesty would be very well content that they should put that Design in Execution, without staying for farther Orders. His Majesty was pleased (with the concurrent Opinion of every Person present) to approve of this Proposition; and immediately made Choice of Mr. Vice-Chamberlain and Sir *William Coventry*, to use all possible Expedition to find out the Fleet, and inform the Generals of all that had passed. I must not forget to say, that at this Conference and before the Messengers were dispatched, Mr. Secretary *Morrice* informed the King, that he had received Intelligence very different from what my Lord *Arlington's* was; which was, that the *Dutch* Fleet was even ready to come out, all their Men being aboard, which was likewise commended to those Two honourable Persons to make Part of their Information. The Winds were so favourable, that the two Messengers went to and returned from the Fleet with more Speed than could reasonably have been expected; they reported to the King, that they had imparted all his Commands to the Generals, and that they had had full Conferences together upon it; that by all the Intelligence they had received, they did conclude, that the *Dutch* were not ready to come out; and therefore they thought it very counselable, that the Prince should endeavour to met with the Duke *de Beaufort*; and in order to that, they had agreed before their coming away, and had agreed what Ships should attend Prince *Rupert*, and what should stay behind with the General, which they resolved should be executed by such a Time, if they did not receive his Majesty's Orders to the contrary; which his Majesty did not think fit to send, since they were of the same Mind, and so they separated each from other, as was agreed. I have heard (but I was not then present) that upon a more certain Intelligence that the *Dutch* Fleet was come out, Orders were sent to hinder the Prince from going out; which, if they had been transmitted with Care enough, would have come to him in time: But there being some Negligence in that, they came not to him time enough to return till the second Day of the Engagement; which is so well known that I need not enlarge upon it. And this is all that I know of the dividing the Fleet; in which I do not know that any Man can be justly blamed with more Reason than all Men may be, whose Counsels have not that Success which is desired; and if there were any Fault committed, I am sure there is no Colour to impute it to me, nor am I in the least degree responsible for any Consequence upon it.

I have now, according as my Memory hath been able to supply, (for I have not any Paper or Note by me for my Assistance) answer'd every particular Charge against me; I hope so fully, that how powerful soever my Enemies shall be yet able to appear, as they do continue very powerful, all indifferent Men will absolve me from any Guilt: And though I neither do or can expect any thing of Justice or Ingenuity from those Persons who have by all the evil Arts imaginable contrived my Destruction, by infusing into his Majesty's Ears Stories of Words spoken, and Things done by me, of which I am as innocent as I was when I was born, and other Jealousies of a Nature which are so odious, that themselves have not the Confidence publickly to own; yet, I say, notwithstanding all this Disadvantage for the present, I do not doubt but that Posterity, if not the present Age, will clearly discern my Integrity and Innocence in all the Particulars which are objected against me, and lament my present Sufferings, that after so many Years of very faithful and painful Service, I should be banished my Country, and forced to seek my Bread in foreign Parts at
this

this Age. However, it concerns me very much to wipe off one Reproach which I may seem to have brought upon my self, by my withdrawing and secretly flying out of the Kingdom, to avoid, as it may be thought, the Justice of Parliament; which, as it is made the Ground and Foundation of the Act of Banishment, so I may reasonably presume that it hath made deep Impression in the Minds of many worthy Persons, who were not over-inclined to entertain a Prejudice against me, and who, by my withdrawing, may reasonably believe, that if I were in truth so innocent as I have professed my self to be, I would not have declined the most severe and strictest Examination of all my Actions, of which I ought to be very ambitious; and that an exact Inquisition might be made into my whole Life, from which, and from which only, if I am so innocent as I pretend to be, I might reasonably promise to my self such a full Vindication, as might amply repair me in Point of Integrity and Honour, not only to the Shame of my Enemies, but to my full Reparation for the Damages I have sustained, if I could prove such a gross Combination and Conspiracy against me as I have seemed to accuse them of: And therefore it concerns me very much to make such a Defence for my self in a clear Relation of all the Motives and Circumstances which prevailed with me at that Time to withdraw my self, after I had so often rejected all Overtures and Advice to that Purpose, and so publicly declared that I would rather undergo all the Danger and Ruin which might attend my being brought to a Tryal, than to contribute to my own Infamy by endeavouring to decline the Tryal: And I hope that when I have made a faithful Narration of all those Reasons and Motives which obliged, and even forced me to do what I did; I shall be thought by all dispassionate Men, not only not to have deserted and betrayed my own Innocence, but to have complied with that Obligation and Duty which I have always paid to his Majesty, and to his Service; and against which I hope, and am most confident, that God Almighty will always preserve me from committing the least Fault or Omission.

When his Majesty was pleased first to send me an Intimation of his Purpose to take the Seal from me, which was by the Duke of *York*, he vouchsafed to use all the gracious Expressions that can be imagined; the great Satisfaction and Benefit he had received by my Service, the Assurance he had of my Fidelity, and that he was confident nothing could be objected against me, which I would not be well able to answer; but that the Parliament had contracted so great a Prejudice against me, that if they had sat but one Day longer before their last Adjournment, they would have accused me of High Treason, and that he was most assured that they continued in that Resolution, and would execute it the first Day of their next Meeting; that I well knew the Condition of his Affairs, and how much he depended upon the *House of Commons* for a Supply of Money, without which he should not be able to support his Government: His Advice therefore was, that I should deliver up the Seal to him out of my own Choice, by which he should be able to protect me from further Inconvenience; and it would be so grateful to the Parliament, that he should in Consideration thereof receive all that he could desire from them. It will easily be believed that I was enough surpris'd with this Message, it being at a Time when my Mind was broken with the Loss of my Wife; for which his Majesty had vouchsafed in his Royal Person to condole with me very few Days before, and when my Condition in all Respects was in no degree pleasant to me: I desired the Duke that he would procure an Audience for me with his Majesty; which his Royal Highness had not the least

least doubt of obtaining, and made as little doubt but that his Majesty, in respect of my Lameness and Indisposition, would be graciously pleased to come to my House: which his Majesty the next Day promised to do; but upon Conference with others, afterwards changed that his gracious Purpose, and appointed me to attend him in a Morning in my own Chamber at *Whitehall*, which being a Ground Room, would not put me to the trouble of going up Stairs; and thither his Majesty did vouchsafe to come to me, there being no body then present but his Majesty and the Duke. The King received me very graciously, with all those Expressions which he had used to the Duke; and when I asked him whether he had taken any Offence at my Carriage, and whether I had misbehaved my self in his Service? He said, No, but the contrary; that I had served him very well, and that he believed no Prince had a better Servant; and that the Resolution he had now taken was for my Good and Preservation; and so enlarged himself upon the Resolution the *House of Commons* had taken to accuse me of High-Treason, and the Prejudice they had against me. I told him, that he might possibly be deceived in that Information; and that if he examined it better, he would find that I was not a Man so universally odious to any Persons of Power and Interest to serve him; at least, that my Lord *Arlington* and Sir *William Coventry*, who were my known Enemies, would not be found to be more popular than myself; that the Manifestation of his Displeasure in this manner would be so far from preserving me, that it would infallibly expose me to the Malice of my Enemies; and was upon the Matter to call for Accusations against me to gratify his Majesty; and I told him then, as I had done before, that Sir *William Coventry* had taken upon him, upon the Day of the last Prorogation, to offer some leading Men of the *House of Commons*, that the Chancellor should be sacrificed to them if that would content them. His Majesty told me, that he knew much more of the Combination that was against me than I did; and that he was most assured, that if I were not removed before the Parliament met, it would not be in his Power to preserve me; but if I voluntarily gave up the Place, and withdrew into the Country, he would undertake I should not receive the least further Trouble. I told him, the Seal was in his own Disposal, he might take it when he pleased; but that I would not bring the Reproach upon myself, by voluntarily giving it up, that I deserted his Service at a Time when some Men would believe that I might be of some Use to him. His Majesty seemed to be resolved upon the Matter, but dismiss'd me with many gracious Expressions of his good Opinion; which he continued long after to do to those Persons, who of themselves taking Notice of this Discourse in the Court, presumed to speak to his Majesty, and to dissuade him from proceeding in that manner towards me; as the Archbishop of *Canterbury*, the Lord General, the Earl of *Bridgwater*, and others; to all whom his Majesty mentioned me as a Person of whose Affection and Integrity to his Service he had an unquestionable Assurance: And I do in truth believe, that his Majesty at that time had been persuaded to believe that my Removal was necessary for his Service, and had in himself no Displeasure towards me, in order to any further Prosecution.

As soon as the Seal was taken from me and delivered to the King, I heard that Mr. *May* had kiss'd the King's Hand, and told him he was then King of *England*, and never before; and then every Day my Enemies declared their Animosities against me; and Sir *William Coventry* declared

publickly in all Places, that he had advised the King to remove me, as a Thing upon which his Welfare depended: My Lord *Arlington* had perswaded the Duke of *Buckingham*, that I had been the sole Person who had contrived the Prosecution that had been lately against him; whereas, in truth, I had never heard any thing of it till the King told it me, and the Lord *Arlington* brought me the Examinations which had been taken, and assured me there would be much more proved against him; upon which I gave such Advice as my Duty obliged me to do: but so far was I from Malice towards the Duke, that I did him all the Offices I could with the King, and contributed at least as much as any Man, as soon as I found by the Lord *Arlington* that some of the Witnesses were dead, and that the Proofs would not make all that good which he had pretended; but the Duke of *Buckingham* was informed that I was the only Cause of his Suffering, and thereupon inveighed against me with his usual Bitterness.

As soon as the Parliament came together, it quickly appeared that my Enemies had so far prevailed with his Majesty as to declare his own Displeasure against me, and against all those who appeared to have no ill Opinion of me; and then nothing was spoken so much of as the Resolution to take my Life; and the Lady *Castlemain* declared that the Duke of *Buckingham* was to sit Lord High Steward of *England* upon my Tryal, many Wagers being laid in the Court that I should lose my Head; and Sir *Thomas Osborne*, a Person of great Intimacy with the Duke of *Buckingham*, had declared in the Country before his coming up to the Parliament, that if the Chancellor were not hanged, he would be hanged himself. All which unusual Proceedings did not in the least degree terrify me; only the Manifestation of the King's so great Displeasure against me (for what Cause God of Heaven knows, I cannot to this Day imagine) did afflict me as it ought to do: Upon which I writ to the King, beseeching him not to give Ear to the Reports raised by my Enemies; but to let me know in what I had offended him, and to beseech him to be satisfied with the Disgrace and Damage I had already received.

From the Beginning of the Prosecution in Parliament against me, some Persons who wished me very well, and were well inform'd of the severe Intentions against me, earnestly advised me to withdraw myself, and thereby to provide for my Security; which I utterly refused to do. And it is well known, that the Day when the *House of Commons* sent up their General Impeachment of High-Treason against me, that my Coach was ready and waited three or four Hours to carry me to the House, I expecting to be sent for till the rising of the House. When the Debate grew so hot in the *House of Peers*, and that after many Expostulations from the *House of Commons*, the *House of Lords* still refused to commit me to Prison, I received new Importunities from my Friends to make my Escape; and they were perswaded by some who had had the greatest Hand in contriving my Ruin, to believe that it would be grateful to the King, and that there should be no means used to obstruct my going away: And when nothing of this could work upon me, the Bishop of *Hereford* (who had not carried himself so well towards me as some Men thought I had deserved from him) first sent to the Bishop of *Winchester*, to persuade him to get me out of the Kingdom; and confessed to him, that it was the King's Desire, though he would not own it to any Body else: and then came to me himself, pressing the same Thing to me; and undertook, upon his Salvation (which was his own Expression)

pression) that I should neither be stopped in my Passage, nor suffer in the least Degree in my Honour or my Fortune, by my Absence; which he said, I could not believe he would undertake without very good Authority: and thereupon enlarged upon the Calamities the Kingdom must suffer by this Difference between the Two Houses, of which I should be looked upon to be the sole Cause, and therefore had Reason to apprehend what Sense the People were like to have of it; and Mr. *Seymour* had the Confidence to tell a Noble Lord of the House, who had vigorously opposed my Commitment, that if the *House of Peers* did not comply with the *House of Commons*, the People would not only pull down my House, but the Houses of all those Lords who adhered to me. I told the Bishop, I was very innocent in all Things laid to my Charge, and therefore I was not to be terrified by any Threats; however, if it were thought fit for his Majesty's Service that I absented my self, I would, without any Consideration how far I might suffer in Point of Reputation, submit to his Majesty's Direction; only I desired that I might have such a Pass as might secure me from being stopped, and exposed as a Spectacle to the People, and as a Man running away from Justice; which the Bishop thought I might reasonably require, and made no doubt of sending it me accordingly: But the next Morning he told the Bishop of *Winchester*, that if the King should grant such a Pass it might give great Offence to the Parliament, which Hazard his Majesty would not run; but renewed all the Assurances he had before given, for the Security of my Passage: and I as positively refused to accept thereof, and so continued in my House, and spoke every Day publicly with many Persons a full Week after the Time that the Bishop had been with me, notwithstanding the daily Advice and Importunity I received from my Friends and nearest Relations to withdraw.

It pleased God that the Duke of *York* had been for some Weeks sick of the Small Pox, so that no Body had spoken with him of any Business for the Space of near a Month; but the Malignity of the Disease being spent, his Majesty himself had, upon the last *Friday* in *November*, visited his Royal Highness; and saying little more then, than in congratulating his Recovery, and expressing his own great Joy in it, he came again to him the next Morning early, and had some private Conference with him. And the King no sooner departed from him, but the Duke bid his Wife send presently to me, and conjure me presently to be gone; that she should let me know that it was absolutely necessary for the King's Service; and that I might be very confident and secure, that I should meet with no Obstruction in the Way, nor undergo the least Damage in my Honour or Fortune by being gone. And upon this Authority and Command I did the same Night, on *Saturday* the last of *November*, One Thousand Six Hundred Sixty and Seven, leave my own House, and went by Coach to *Erif*, where I embarked; and it pleased God, after four Days struggling with ill Wind and Weather, I arrived at *Calais* the *Wednesday* following. And I did no more in this Adventure, whatever Prejudice I have undergone by it, than I shall always do, in sacrificing my Honour, and my Life it self, upon the least Intimation of his Majesty's Pleasure, and whenever he thinks his Service may be advanced by it. And if any Man shall yet think, notwithstanding all that I have said, that I ought not to have withdrawn my self, but to have remained there in Prison, or any other Condition they would have put me in, until I had been fully cleared upon a fair Trial; he will, I hope, have so much Compassion of me, as to think I had great Difficulties to contend with,
and

88 *Lord CLARENDON's Vindication, &c.*

and will lament, on my Behalf, that I am forced to undergo so hard a Fate after the Age of Threescore Years, whereof Thirty have been spent in the Service of the Crown; and for the Prosperity whereof, and the Happiness of his Majesty's Royal Person, my daily Prayers shall be poured out, in what Condition soever I am in, and in what Corner of the World soever I shall be confined or condemned to.



REFLECTIONS



REFLECTIONS
Upon Several
CHRISTIAN DUTIES,
DIVINE and *MORAL*,
By way of
ESSAYS.

Of HUMANE NATURE.

MONTPELLIER, 1668.



HE perpetual Fear and Agony and Apprehension, which wicked Men always feel within themselves, is the Argument that *Epicurus* made, that Humane Nature is so far from being inclined to Ill, that it abhors all kind of Wickedness ; *quia infixa nobis ejus rei averfatio est, quam natura damnavit, ideo nunquam fides latendi fit etiam latentibus* ; and the frequent Discoveries of very enormous Crimes after long Concealments, merely from the Unquietness of the Offenders own Breasts, manifests how far our Nature is from being delighted with Works of Darkness, that it cannot rest till they be exposed to Light. If we did not take great Pains, and were not at great Expence to corrupt our

Nature, our Nature would never corrupt us: We administer all the Helps of Industry and Art to provoke our Appetites, and to inflame our Blood, and then we accuse Nature for leading us into Excesses; we kindle that Fire that kindles our Lust with a licentious Diet, and then fan it into a Flame with obscene Discourses, and revile Nature that it will not permit us to be chaste; we provoke and cherish our Anger with unchristian Principles of Revenge, and then inveigh against Nature for making us chole-
rick: when, God knows, the little Good we have in us, we owe only to the Integrity of our Nature; which hath restrained us from many Vices which our Passions would hurry us into. Very many Men have remained or become temperate, by the very Nautiating and Aversion that Nature hath to Surfeits and Excesses; and others have been restrained from making wicked Attempts, by the Horror and Trembling that Nature hath suggested to them in the Approach. Many excellent Men have grown to rare Perfections in Knowledge and in Practice, to great Learning, great Wisdom, great Virtue, without ever having felt the least Repugnance in their Nature to interrupt them in their Progress; on the contrary, their Inclinations have been strengthened, their Vivacity increased, from the very Impulsion of their Nature: But we may reasonably believe, that never Man made a great Progress in Wickedness, so as to arrive at a Mastery in it, without great Interruption and Contradiction from his natural Genius: insomuch as we see Men usually take Degrees in Wickedness, and come not to a Perfection in it *per Saltum*; which can proceed from nothing but the Resistance it finds from the Nature of Man. And if we do seriously consider, how few Men there are who endeavour by Art or Industry to cultivate that Portion which Nature hath given them, to improve their Understanding, and to correct any Infirmary they may be liable to, by so much as abstaining from any Vice which corrupts both Body and Mind; we must conclude, that they owe that which is good in themselves to Nature, since they have nothing by their own Acquisition. We cannot justly be reproached, that in this magnifying and extolling Nature, we do too much neglect and undervalue the Influence of God's Grace: Nature is as much the Creation of God, as Grace is; and it is his Bounty that he created Nature in that Integrity, and hath since restored it to that Innocence, or annexed that Innocence to it, if it be not maliciously ravished, or let loose from it. All the Particulars mentioned before may properly be called the Operation of Nature, because they have been often found in those who have had no Light of Grace, and may be still thought to be the Supply of Nature in those who seem not to walk by that Light; nor is the Price of Grace at all advanced, or the Way to attain it made more clear and easy, by such an affected Contempt of Nature, which makes us only capable of the other.

Of LIFE.

JERSEY, 1647.

SO teach us to number our Days, that we may apply our Hearts unto Wisdom, was the Ejaculation of Moses, when he was in full Contemplation of the Providence and Power of God, and of the Frailty and Brevity of the Life of Man: And though, from the Consideration of our own Time, the Days allotted for our Life, we cannot make any proportionable Prospect toward the Providence and Power of God, no more than we can make an Estimate of the Largeness and Extent of the

the Heavens by the View of the smallest Cottage or Molehill upon the Earth; yet there cannot be a better Expedient, at the least an easier, a Thing we believe we can more easily practise, to bring our selves to a due Reverence of that Providence, to a due Apprehension of that Power, and thereupon to a useful Disposition of our Time in this World, how frail and short soever it is, than by applying our selves to this Advice of *Moses*, to *learn to number our Days*. There is not a Man that reads, or hears this read, but thinks the Lesson may be learned with little Pains; nay, that he hath it so perfect, that he needs not learn it: and yet if the best of us would but fix our Minds upon it, sadly *number our Days*, the Days which we have or shall have in this World, we could not but, out of that one single Notion, make our selves much the fitter for the next; and if the worst of us would but exercise our selves in it, but *number our Days*, we should even in spite of the worst cozen our selves into some Amendment of Life, into some Improvement of Knowledge, into some Reformation of Understanding; it would not be in our Power, nor in his who is ready to assist us in any Evil, to continue so weak, so wilful, so wicked as we are; but we should insensibly find such an Alteration, as, how much soever we condemn now, we shall thank our selves for obtaining.

They who understand the Original, tell us, that the *Hebrew* Verb, which our Interpreters translate into *Number*, hath a very large Signification, (as that Language which is contracted into fewest Words, extends many Words to a marvellous Latitude of Sense,) and that as well as to *number*, it signifies to *weigh*, and to *ponder*, and thirdly to *order* and *appoint*; so that to *number*, or any other single Word, I believe, in any other Tongue, is far from expressing to the full the Sense of that *Hebrew* Verb; except we could find a Word that might signify to *reckon*, to *examine* and *consider* the Nature and the Use of every Unite in that Reckoning, and then to order and appoint it accordingly. And no doubt it was such a Numbering, with that Circumstance of Deliberation, and the other of Direction and Determination, which *Moses* here prescribed; and so the Duty may seem larger, and at first more full of Difficulty, than it did; and that we are not to rest merely in the arithmetical Sense of it. But as the setting out is oftentimes more troublesome than the whole Journey, and the first Disposol of the Mind to Sobriety and Virtue, is more difficult than any Progress after in it; so if we but really and severely execute this Injunction in the usual and vulgar Acceptation of the Word, no more but *number our Days* by the Rules of Arithmetick, we should make a Progress in the other Acceptances too; and we should find evident Comfort and Benefit from the Fruit we should gather from each of those Branches.

Without diminishing or lessening the Value of a long Life, with the Meditation that a Thousand Years are but as Yesterday in his Sight who made the Years and the Days; or that not only the longest Life that ever any Man hath lived, but even the Life that the World hath lived since the Creation, is but a Moment in Comparison of that Eternity which must be either the Reward or Punishment of the Actions of our Life, how short soever it is: If we did but so *number our Days*, as to consider that we experimentally find the Shortness of them; if we did but number the Days we have lived, and by that pregnant Evidence of our Memory, how soon they are gone, and how insensibly, conclude how very soon so much more Time, which possibly would bring us to the utmost of *Moses's* Account of Eighty Years, will likewise pass away; we could not think the most sure and infallible

fallible Purchase of Twenty or Thirty Years of Life, and the unquestionable Fruition of the most heighten'd Pleasures the Appetite or Fancy can imagine during that Term, without any Abatement by the Interposition of the Infirmities and Weakness of Nature, or the Interruption of Accidents, so near worth the consenting to any thing that may impair the Conscience, or disturb the Peace or Quiet of the Mind, that it were a valuable Consideration for the Interruption of a Night's Rest, for the parting with Six Hours of our Sleep; which, though any Man could spare, is so much Time of our least Faultiness: I say, it were not possible seriously to make this Estimate in our Thoughts, to revolve the Uncertainty and Brevity of our Life; but we should also take an Account of our selves, weigh and ponder the Expence of every Article of this short precious Time, for which we must make so large and exact an Account to him that hath trusted us with it; we should not but (which is no more than the Original Verb for which we read *number* signifies) do, what one who we are not willing to believe as good a Christian as our selves long since advised us, *pretium temporis ponere, diem estimare*, consider that every Hour is worth at least a good Thought, a good Wish, a good Endeavour; that it is the Talent we are trusted with to use, employ, and to improve: If we hide this Talent in the Dark, that the World cannot see any Fruit of it, or such Fruit as we our selves are afraid to see; if we bury it in the Earth, spend it in worldly and sensual Designs and Attempts; we are those ungrateful and unthrifty Stewards, who must expiate this Breach of Trust in endless Torments. And if we were gotten thus far, we could not but, in spite of the most depraved Faculty of our Understanding, of the most perverse Inclination of our Appetite, or Act of our Will, order and dispose of this Time right; which is the full Extent of the Word. So that in truth, if we do not weigh and consider to what End this Life is given to us, and thereupon order and dispose it right; pretend what we will to the Arithmetick, we do not, we cannot so much as number our Days in the narrowest and most limited Signification. It is a sharp Meditation and Animadversion of One, whose Writings are an Honour to our Nation, that the incessant and sabbathless Pursuit of a Man's Fortune and Interest, (although therein we could refrain from doing Injuries or using evil Arts) leaves not the Tribute of our Time which we owe to God, who demandeth we see a Tenth of our Substance, and a Seventh (which is more strict) of our Time; and (says he) it is to small purpose to have an erected Face toward Heaven, and a groveling Spirit upon Earth. If they who please themselves with believing that they spend their Time the least amiss; who have so far the negative Practice of Conscience, that they abstain from Acts of Inhumanity and Injustice, and avoid doing harm to any body; nay, if they make such a Progress into the active Part of Conscience, as to delight in the civil Acts of Humanity, and the diffusive Acts of Charity: I say, if this Handful of the World that is thus innocent, (and what dismal Account must the other Part take of themselves then) would seriously examine and revolve the Expence of their own Time, they would even wonder at the little good they find in themselves, and not be able to tell to the well spending of what Part of their Time those good Inclinations are to be imputed. We think it a commendable thing, (and value our selves much upon it) to take great Pains, to use much Industry, to make our selves fine Gentlemen, to get Languages, to learn Arts; it may be some for which we are the worse: and we acknowledge, that that is not to be done, nay, any Exercise of the Body to be learned, or the most mechanick Trade, without great Pains and Industry; but

but to make our selves Christians, to know God, and what he expects from us, and what will be acceptable to him, we take not the least Pains, use not the least Industry. I am persuaded, if many of us, who have lived to good Years, did faithfully compute in what particular Meditations and Actions we have spent our Time, we should not be able, amongst the Years we have spent in pursuing our Pleasures, our Profits, our Ambition, the Days and Nights we have dedicated to our Lusts, our Excesses, the Importunities and Sollicitations we have used to mend our Fortunes; we should not be able to set down one Hour for every Year of our Life, I fear not one Hour for our whole Life, which we have solemnly spent to mend our Christianity; in which we have devoutly considered the Majesty and Providence and Goodness of God, the Reason and the End of our own Creation; that there is such a Place as Heaven for the Reward of those who do well, or Hell for the Punishment of the Wicked; For if we had spent but one Hour in the contemplating those Particulars, which are the first and most general Notions of Christianity, it were not possible but we should be startled out of our lethargick Laziness, and should make some Progress in the Practice of Christianity, as well as in those Paths and Roads that lead to our Pleasure or Profit. What is this Inadvertency and Incogitancy, but to believe that, as we received this Badge of Christianity in our Infancy when we knew not of it, so it will grow and increase upon us in our Sleep and Times of Leisure, without taking Notice of it; that the little Water that was thrown upon our Face in Baptism, was enough to preserve the Beauty of God's Image in us, without any Addition of Moisture from our selves, either by Tears in our Repentance, or so much as by Sweat in our Industry and Labour; and to declare to all the World, that we hold the Life of a Christian to be nothing else, but spending so many Days as Nature allows us, in a Climate where the Gospel of Christ is suffered to be preached, how little soever desired to be practised. If we would so *number our Days*, that is, so consider of them, as to order and dispose some Part of our Time, one Hour in a Day, one Day in ten, but to think of God, and what he hath done for us; to remember that we are Christians, and the Obligation that thereby lies upon us; that there will be a Day of Judgment, and that we must appear at that Day: though it may be it would be a difficult Thing at the first, in that set Time, to apply our unexercised and uninformed Thoughts to so devout and religious an Exercise as we should; yet, I say, if we would but so set apart a Time for that Purpose, as to resolve at that Time constantly to do nothing else, how perfunctorily soever we did that, we should by degrees bring our selves from sober and humble Thoughts, to pious and godly Thoughts, till we found our selves growing so perfect Christians, as to confess we were not worthy of that Title before.

Next the Sadness of reviewing the Expence of our Time, in order to our Service of God, and the Health and Prosperity of our Souls; it is a melancholy Consideration how we spend our Time with reference to our selves, to the obtaining that which we most desire, to consider how our Time goes from us; for we are hardly active enough to be thought to spend it. We live rather the Life of Vegetatives or Sensitives, suffer our selves to grow, and please and satisfy our Appetites, than the Lives of reasonable Men, endued with Faculties to discern the Natures and Differences of Things, and to use and govern both. There is not a Man in the World, but desires to be, or to be thought to be a wise Man; and yet, if he considered how little he contributes himself thereunto, he might

wonder to find himself in any tolerable degree of Understanding. How many Men are there, nay, in Comparison of Mankind how few are there but such, who since they were able to think, and could chuse whether they would or no, never seriously spent two Hours by themselves in so much as thinking what would make them wiser; but sleep, and eat and play, which makes the whole Circle of their Lives, and are not in Seven Years together (except asleep) one Hour by themselves. It is a strange thing, to see the Care and Solitude that is used to strengthen and cherish the Body; the Study and Industry and Skill to form and shape every Member and Limb to Beauty and Comeliness; to teach the Hands and Feet and Eyes the Order and Gracefulness of Motion; to cure any Defects of Nature or Accident, with any Hazard and Pain, insomuch as we oftentimes see even those of the weaker Sex, and less inclined to Suffering, willingly endure the breaking of a Bone that cannot otherwise be made strait; and all this ado but to make a handsome and beautiful Person, which at best is but the Picture of a Man or Woman, without a wise Soul: When to the Information and Improvement of that Jewel, which is the Essence of Man; and which unconsidered, even that which we so labour for and are proud of, our Beauty and Handsomeness, is by many degrees inferior to that of a thousand Beasts and other Creatures; to the cultivating and shaping and directing of the Mind, we give scarce a Thought, not an Hour of our Life; never suppress a Passion, never reform an Affection; insomuch as (though never Age had fewer wise Men to shew to the World) we may justly wonder we are not all Fools and Idiots, when we consider how little we have contributed to make our selves other: And doubtless if Nature (whom we are ready to accuse of all our Weaknesses and Perversenesses) had not out of her Store bountifully supplied us, our own Art and Industry would never have kept up our Faculties to that little vile Height they are at. Neither in truth do many believe or understand that there needs any other Diligence or Art to be applied to the Health of the Mind, than the sober ordering and disposing of the Body; and 'tis well if we can bring our selves to that reasonable Conclusion. Whereas when we prescribe our selves a wholesome and orderly Course of Diet, for the strengthening of our Natures, and confirming our Healths; if we would consider what Diet to give our Minds, what Books to read for the informing and strengthening our Understandings, and conclude that it is as impossible for the Mind to be improved without those Supplies, as for the Body to subsist without its natural Food: If when we allow our selves Re-creations and Exercises, to cherish and refresh our Spirits, and to waste and dispel Humours, without which a well-temper'd Constitution cannot be preserved, we would allow some Exercises to our Minds, by a sober and frank Conversation with learned honest and prudent Men, whose Informations Animadversions and Experience might remove and expel the Vanities and Levities which infect our Understandings: If when an Indisposition or Distemper of Body, an ill Habit of Health calls upon us to take a rougher Course with our selves, to vomit up or purge away those cholerick and phlegmatick and melancholick Humours, which burn and cloy and suffocate the vital Parts and Passages; to let out that Blood which is too rank, too corrupted for our Veins, and to expel those Fumes and Vapours which hurt our Stomachs and ascend to our Brains: If we would, I say, as diligently examine the Distemper of our Minds, revolve the Rage and Fury of our Choler, the Dulness and Laziness of our Phlegm, the Sullenness and Pride of our Melancholy; if we would correct this Affection, and
draw

draw out that Passion; expel those Fumes and Vapours of Ambition which disturb and corrupt our Reason and Judgment, by sober and serious Meditation of the Excellency and Benefit of Patience Alacrity and Contentedness; that this Affection and this Passion is not consistent with Sobriety and Justice, and that the satisfying them with the utmost Licence brings neither Ease nor Quiet to the Mind, which is not capable of any Happiness but in, at least not without, its own Innocence; that Ambition always carries an Insatiableness with it, which is a Torment to the Mind, and no less a Disease than that is to the Stomach: In a Word, If we would consider, there is scarce a Disease, an Indisposition, a Distemper, by which the Body is disturbed, to which, or some Influence like it, the Mind is not liable likewise; and that the Remedies for the Latter are much more natural, more in our Power than for the Former; if we would use but half the Diligence and Industry to apply them which we do to the other; we should find our selves another kind of People, our Understandings more vigorous and our Lives more innocent, useful, and beneficial, to God, to our selves, and to our Country; and we should think we had learned nothing, till we had learned *so to number our Days that we might apply our Hearts unto Wisdom*; that Wisdom, of which the Fear of the Lord is the Beginning, and of which the eternal Blessing of God is the End and the Reward.

*Reflections upon the Happiness which we may enjoy
in and from our selves.*

MONTPELLIER, 1669.

IT was a very just Reproach that *Seneca* charged the World with so many Hundred Years ago, and yet was not more the Disease of that than of this Age, that we wonder and complain of the Pride and Superciliousness of those who are in Place and Authority above us; that we cannot get an Admittance to them; that they are never at Leisure that we may speak to them; When (says he) we are never vacant, never at Leisure to speak to our selves; *Audet quispiam de alterius superbia queri, qui sibi ipse nunquam vacat*: and after all Complaints and Murmurs, the greatest and the proudest of them will be sometimes at Leisure, may be sometimes spoken with; *aliquando respexit, tu non inspicere te unquam, non audire dignatus es*; we can never get an Audience of our selves, never vouchsafe to confer together. We are diligent and curious enough to know other Men; and it may be charitable enough to assist them, to inform their Weakness by our Instruction, and to reform their Errors by our Experience: and all this without giving one Moment to look into our own, never make an Inspection into our selves, nor ask one of those Questions of our selves which we are ready to administer to others, and thereby imagine that we have a perfect Knowledge of them. We live with other Men and to other Men; neither with nor to our selves. We may sometimes be at Home left to our selves, when others are weary of us, and we are weary of being with them; but we do not dwell at Home, have no Commerce, no Conversation with our selves, nay, we keep Spies about us that we may not have; and if we feel a Suggestion, hear an importunate Call from within, we divert it by Company or quiet it with Sleep; and when we wake, no Man runs faster from an Enemy than we do from our selves, get to our Friends that we may not be with our selves. This is not only an Epidemical Disease

ease that spreads every where, but affected and purchased at as great a Price as most other of our Diseases, with the Expence of all our precious Time; one Moment of which we are not willing to bestow upon our selves, though it would make the Remainder of it more useful to us, and to others upon whom we prodigally consume it, without doing good to them or our selves: Whereas, if we would be conversant with our selves, and as ingenuous and impartial in that Conversation as we pretend to be with other Men, we should find that we have very much of that at Home by us, which we take wonderful unnecessary Pains to get Abroad; and that we have much of that in our own Disposal, which we endeavour to obtain from others; and possess our selves of that Happiness from our selves, whether it concerns our Ambition or any other of our most exorbitant Passions or Affections, which more provoke and less satisfy by resorting to other Men, who are either not willing to gratify us, or not able to comply with our Desires; and the Trouble and Agony, which for the most part accompanies those Disappointments, proceeds merely from our not Beginning with our selves before we repair to others.

It is not the Purpose and End of this Discourse, to raise such seraphical Notions of the Vanity and Pleasures of this World, as if they were not worthy to be considered, or could have no Relish with virtuous and pious Men. They take very unprofitable Pains, who endeavour to persuade Men that they are obliged wholly to despise this World and all that is in it, even whilst they themselves live here: God hath not taken all that Pains in forming and framing and furnishing and adorning this World, that they who were made by him to live in it should despise it; it will be enough if they do no love it so immoderately, to prefer it before him who made it: Nor shall we endeavour to extend the Notions of the *Stoick* Philosophers, and to stretch them farther by the help of Christian Precepts, to the extinguishing all those Affections and Passions, which are and will always be inseparable from human Nature; and which it were to be wished that many Christians could govern and suppress and regulate, as well as many of those heathen Philosophers used to do. As long as the World lasts, and Honour and Virtue and Industry have Reputation in the World, there will be Ambition and Emulation and Appetite in the best and most accomplished Men who live in it; if there should not be, more Barbarity and Vice and Wickedness would cover every Nation of the World, than it yet suffers under. If wise and honest and virtuously-disposed Men quit the Field, and leave the World to the Pillage, and the Manners of it to the Deformation of Persons dedicated to Rapine, Luxury and Injustice, how savage must it grow in half an Age? Nor will the best Princes be able to govern and preserve their Subjects, if the best Men be without Ambition and Desire to be employed and trusted by them. The End therefore of this Speculation into our selves, and Conversation with our selves, is, that we may make our Journey towards that which we do propose with the more Success; that we may be discreet in proposing reasonable Designs, and then pursue them by reasonable Ways; foresee all the Difficulties which are probable to fall out, that so we may prevent or avoid them: since we may be sure to master and avoid them to a great degree by foreseeing them, and as sure to be confounded by them, if they fall upon us without foresight. In a word, it is not so to consult with our selves, as to consult with no body else; or to dispose us to prefer our own Judgment before any other Man's: but first, by an impartial Conference with our selves, we may understand first our own Mind, what it is we would have, and why we would have it, before

we

we consult with others which way to compass it, that we may set both the Matter we desire and the Manner of obtaining it before our own Eyes, and spend our Passions upon our selves in the Disquisition.

It is no wonder that when we are prodigal of nothing else, when we are over-thrifty of many Things which we may well spare, we are very prodigal of our Time, which is the only precious Jewel of which we cannot be too thrifty, because we look upon it as nothing worth, and that makes us not care how we spend it. The Labouring-man and the Artificer knows what every Hour of his Time is worth, what it will yield him, and parts not with it but for the full Value: They are only Noblemen and Gentlemen, who should know best how to use it, that think it only fit to be cast away; and their not knowing how to set a true Value upon this, is the true Cause of the wrong Estimate they make of all other Things; and their Ignorance of that proceeds only from their holding no Correspondence with themselves, or thinking at all before they begin their Journey, before they violently set their Affections upon this or that Object, until they find they are out of the Way, and meet with false Guides to carry them farther out. We should find much Ease in our Pursuits, and probably much better Success in our Attempts and Enterprizes in the World, if before we are too solicitous and set our Heart upon any Design, we would well weigh and consider the true Value of the Thing we desire, whether it be indeed worth all that Trouble we shall be put to, and all the Time we are like to spend in the obtaining it, and upon it after we have obtained it: if this Inquisition doth not divert us, as it need not to do, it will the better prepare and dispose us to be satisfied after we have it; whereas nothing is more usual than for Men who succeed in their most impatient Pretences, to be more unsatisfied with their Success than they were before; it is not worth what they thought or were persuaded it would be, so that their Appetite is not at all allayed nor their Gratitude provoked by the Obligation; a little previous Consideration would have better fitted the Mind to Contentedness upon the Issue, or diverted it from affecting what would not be acceptable when obtained. In the next place, we should do well prudently to consider, whether it be probable that we shall obtain what we desire, before we engage our Affections and our Passions too deeply in the Prosecution of it; not that we may not lawfully affect and prosecute an Interest in which it is very probable we may not succeed. Men who always succeed in what they go about, are often the worse for their Success; however, we are not naturally delighted with Repulses, and are commonly angry and sottishly offended with those, who obtain that for themselves which we would fain have, and as unreasonably with those who favour them, though their Merit be above our own; and therefore besides the Consideration of the Probability that we may be disappointed of our End, we shall do well to consider likewise the Opposition we are like to meet in the Way, the Power of those Persons who are like to disavour our Pretences, and whether our exposing our selves to their Displeasure may not be a greater Damage than the obtaining all that we desire will recompence. These and the like Reflections will cost us very little Time, but infinitely advance and improve our Understanding; and if we then conclude it fit to proceed, we shall do it with Confidence, and be disturbed with no Accident which encounters us, and be prepared to behave our selves decently upon the Repulse, which oftentimes prefers Men better than they wished; a virtuous Mind appearing with more Lustre in the Rejection than in the Reception of good Turns, and consequently reconciling him to those who knew him not enough before.

These Considerations will be most impartially and sincerely debated with our selves, yet they may be properly enough and usefully consulted with very true and faithful Friends, if indeed we abound with such Treasure. But there is another Consideration so proper and peculiar for our selves, and to be exactly weighed by our selves, that the most faithful Friend is rarely faithful enough to be trusted enough in the Disquisition, and which is worst of all, we do not wish or desire that he should be faithful; that is, whether we are in truth fit and worthy of the Thing we do affect; if it be an Honour, whether it be not too great for us; if it be an Office, whether we are equal to it; that is, fit and capable to discharge and execute it, or can make our selves so by the Industry and Diligence we are like to contribute towards it: This is the Examination we come with least Ingenuity to, and Friends are ingenuous in assisting us in; and yet is of that Importance, that much of the Happiness of our Life consists in it, many having been made unhappy and even very miserable by Preferment, who were in good Reputation without it. *Tully* makes it a necessary Ingredient in, or a necessary Concomitant of Friendship it self, *Tantum cuique tribuendum est, primum, quantum ipse efficere possis, deinde etiam quantum quem diligas, atque adjuves possit sustinere*; It is a very imprudent and unjust Thing to oblige a Friend to do that out of his Friendship to thee, which either he cannot do or not without great Prejudice to himself; but it is an impudent Violation of Friendship, to importune him to procure a Favour to be conferred upon thee which thou canst not sustain; to put the Command of a Ship into thy Hand, when thou knowest neither the Compass or the Rudder. There are as great Incongruities and Incapacities towards the Execution of many Offices, which do not appear so gross to the first Discovery. This Scrutiny cannot be so rigidly and effectually made without well weighing, in the first Place, the infinite Prejudice that befalls our selves, if we are incompetent for that Place or Office which we have by much Sollicitation obtained, and the unspeakable and irreparable Prejudice we have brought upon our Friends who obtained it for us. How many Men have we known, who from a Reservedness in their Nature have been thought to observe much, and by saying little have been believed to know much; but when they have got themselves into an Office, and so been compelled to speak and direct, have appeared weak and ignorant, and incapable of performing their Duty; and so must either be removed, to their own Shame and Reproach, or be continued, to the publick Detriment and Dishonour? How much better had it been for such Men to have remained unknown and secure under the Shadow of their Friends good Opinion, than to have been exposed to the Light and made known only by the Discovery of their incredible Ignorance? We have known many Men who, in a Place to which they have been unhappily promoted, have appeared scandalously insufficient; but being removed to another, have discharged it with notable Abilities: yet there was nothing new in himself, if he had asked Advice of himself he would have known all that hath fallen out since so much to his Prejudice. He who hath Credit with his Prince, or with his Friend to prefer or recommend a Man to his near and intire Trust, hath a great Trust himself reposed in him, which he is obliged to discharge with the utmost Circumspection and Fidelity; and if he be swayed by thy Confidence and Importunity, or corrupted by his own Affection, and recommends thee to an Employment, which when thou art possessed of thou canst not discharge, with what Confusion must he look upon him whom he hath deceived and betrayed, or can he ever look again to be depended upon or
advised

advised with upon the like Affair? Doing good Offices and good Turns (as Men call it) looks like the natural Effect of a noble and a generous Nature. Indeed the Inclination to it is an Argument of Generosity; but a precipitate entring upon the Work it self, and embracing all Opportunities to gratify the Pretences of unwary Men, is an Evidence of a light and easy Nature, disposed at other Mens Charges to get himself well spoken off.

They who revolve these Particulars, cannot but think them worthy a very serious Examination; and must discern, that by entring into this strict Consultation with themselves in or before the Beginning of any Business, they shall prevent much Trouble and Labour which they shall not be able afterwards to avoid: nor can they prudently or so successfully consult with others, before they first deliberate with themselves the very Method and Manner of communicating with another, how much a Friend soever, what concerns ones self requiring as much Consideration as the Matter it self. But there is another Benefit and Advantage that results from this Intercourse and Acquaintance with our selves, more considerable than any thing which hath been said, which is, that from this Communication he takes more care to cultivate and improve himself, that he may be equal and worthy of that Trust which he reposes in himself, and fit to consult with and govern himself by; he gets as much Information from Books and wise Men, as may enable him to answer and determine those doubtful Questions which may arise; he extinguishes that Choler and Prejudice which would interrupt him in hearing, and corrupt him in judging what he hears. It is a notable Injunction that *Seneca* imposes, who knew as well as any Man what Man could bring himself to, *Dum te efficit eum, coram quo peccare non audeas*; the truth is, he hath too little Reverence for himself, who dares do that in his own Presence, which he would be ashamed, or not dare to do before another Man; and it is for want of Acquaintance with our selves, and revolving the Dignity of our Creation, that we are without that Reverence. Who, that doth consider how near he is of kin to God himself, and how excellently he is qualified by him to judge aright of all the Delusions and Appearances of the World, if he will employ those Faculties he hath adorned him with; that no body is able to deceive him, if he doth not concur and contribute to the deceiving himself: I say, who can consider and weigh this, and at the same time bury all those Faculties of the discerning Soul in sensual Pleasures, Laziness and senseless Inactivity, and as much as is in his Power, and God knows there is too much in his Power, to level himself with the Beasts that perish? It is a foolish Excuse we make upon all Occasions for our selves and other Men, in our laboured and exalted Acts of Folly and Madness, that we can be no wiser than God hath made us, as if the Defects in our Will were Defects in his Providence; when in truth God hath given us all that we will make our selves capable of, that we will receive from him. He hath given us Life, that is Time, to make our selves learned, to make our selves wise, to make us discern and judge of all the Mysteries of the World: If we will bestow this Time, which would supply us with Wisdom and Knowledge, in Wine and Women, which corrupt the little Understanding that Nature hath given us; if we will barter it away for Skill in Horses, Dogs and Hawks; and if we will throw it away in Play and Gaming; it is from our own Villany that we are Fools, and have rejected the Effects of his Providence. It is no wiser an Allegation, that our Time is our own, and we may use it as we please: There is nothing so much our own that we may use it as we please; we cannot use our Money, which is as much if
not

not more our own than any thing we have, to raise Rebellion against our Prince, or to hire Men to do Mischief to our Neighbours; we cannot use our Bodies, which if any thing are our own, in Duels or any unlawful Enterprize: and why should we then believe that we have so absolute and sovereign a disposal of our Time, that we may chuse whether we will dispose it to any thing or no? It were to be wished that all Men did believe, which they have all great reason to do, that the Consumption and Spending of our Time will be the great Inquisition of the last and terrible Day; when there shall be a more strict Enquiry how the most dissolute Person, the most debauched Bankrupt spent his Time, than how he spent his Estate: No doubt it will then manifestly appear, that our precious Time was not lent us to do nothing with, or to be spent upon that which is worse than nothing; and we shall not be more confounded with any thing, than to find that there is a perfect Register kept of all that we did in that Time; and that when we have scarce remembred the Morrow what we did Yesterday, there is a Diary in which nothing we did is left out, and as much Notice taken when we did nothing at all. This will be a sad Animadversion when it is too late, and when probably it may appear that the very idle Man, he who hath never employed himself, may be in a very little better Condition than he who hath been worst employ'd; when Idleness shall be declared to be a Species of Wickedness, and doing nothing to be the Activity of a Beast. There cannot therefore be too serious or too early a Reflection upon the good Husbandry of this precious Talent, which we are entrusted with, not to be laid out in vain Pleasures whereof we are ashamed as soon as we have enjoyed them, but in such profitable Exchanges that there may be some Record of our Industry, if there be none of our Getting.

The truth is, if Incogitance and Inadvertence, not thinking at all, not considering any thing (which is degrading our selves as much as is in our Power from being Men, by renouncing the Faculties of a reasonable Soul) were not our mortal Disease, it might be believed that the Consumption of our Time proceeds only from the Contempt we have of Wisdom and Virtue; for in order to any thing else we employ it well enough. How can we pretend that we desire to be wise, when we do no one thing that is in order to it; or that we love Virtue, when we do not cultivate any one Affection that would advance it, nor subdue any one Passion that destroys it? We see the Skill and Perfection in the meanest and lowest Trade is obtained by Industry and Instruction and Observation, and that with all that Application very much Time is necessary to it; and can we believe that Wisdom, which is the greatest Perfection and highest Operation of the Soul, can be got without Industry and Labour? Can we hope to find Gold upon the Surface of the Earth, when we dig almost to the Center of it to find Lead and Tin and the coarser Metals? It is very wonderful, if it be not very ridiculous, to see a Man take great Pains to learn to dance, and not to be at leisure to learn to read; that Men should set a very high Esteem upon the decent Motion and handsome Figure of the Body, and undervalue the Mind so much as not to think it worth any Pains or Consideration to improve the Faculties thereof, or to contribute to its Endowments; and yet all Mens Experience supplies them with Evidence enough, that the excellent Simmetry of the Body, a very handsome Outside of a Man, doth too frequently expose Men to Derision and notorious Contempt, when so gross Defects of the Mind are discovered, as make the other Beauty less agreeable by being more remarkable: Whereas, on the contrary,

the Beauty of the Mind doth very frequently reconcile the Eyes and Ears of all Men to the most unpromising Countenances, and to Persons nothing beholden to Nature for any Comeliness; yet the Wisdom and Gravity of their Words in perswading and convincing, and the Sincerity and Virtue of their Actions, extort an Esteem and Reverence from all kind of Men, that no comely and graceful Outside of a Man could ever attain to. It is not to be wished, that Men took less care of their Bodies than they do; they cannot be too solicitous to preserve their Health, and to confirm it, by preventing those Diseases which the Excess and Corruption of Humours are naturally the Causes of, with timely Physick, and seasonable Application of Remedies, and above all by strict and wholesome Diet; Health is so inestimable a Blessing and Benefit, that we cannot take too much Pains, nor study too much, to obtain and preserve it: But the Grief is, that the whole Care is laid out for the Body, and none at all for the Mind; that we are so jealous of every Alteration in our Constitution, of every light Indisposition of our Body, that we too commonly apply Cures when there are no Diseases, and cause the Sickness we would prevent: when, at the same time, there are twenty visible Diseases and Distempers of our Mind, which we never look after nor take care of, though they would be more easily cured than the other, and being cured, would yield that infinite Pleasure and Satisfaction to the Body, that Sickness itself could not deprive it of. Dost thou find Laziness and Excess of Sleep affect thy Body? And dost thou find Exercise and moderate Labour revive thy Spirits, and increase thy Appetite? Examine thy Mind, whether it hath not too much Emptiness, whether it can *cogitandi ferre laborem*, whether it can bear the Fatigue of Thinking, and produce any Conclusion from thence; and then administer a fit Diet of Books to it, and let it take Air and Exercise in honest and chearful Conversation, with Men that can descend and bow their Natures and their Understandings to the Capacity and to the Indisposition and Weakness of other Men. A sour and morose Companion is as unnatural a Prescription to such a Patient, as the Exercise of Tennis is to a Man who hath broken a Vein, when any violent Motion may be mortal. If thy Mind be loose, and most delighted with vain and unclean Discourses and unchaste Desires, prescribe it a Diet of Contemplation upon the Purity of the Nature of God, and the Injunction he hath given us to live by, and the frequent Conquest Men have made thereby upon their own most corrupt and depraved Affections; and let it have its Exercise and Recreation with Men of that Severity, that restrain all ill Discourse by the Gravity of their Presence, and yet of that Candour as may make them agreeable to those who must by degrees be brought to love them, and to find another kind of Pleasure, yet Pleasure that hath a greater Relish in their Company, than in those they have been most accustomed to. Men give over the Diseases of the Mind as incurable; call them Infirmities of Nature, which cannot be subdued, hardly corrected; or substantial Parts of Nature, that cannot be cut off, or divided from our Humanity; that Anger is the Result of a generous Nature, that will not, ought not to submit to Injuries and Affronts; that Lust is so inseparable from our Nature, that nothing but want of Health can allay it; and that there is no other way to cure the Disease, but to kill the Patient; that it proceeds not from any virtuous Habit of the Mind, where these natural Affections and Appetites do not prevail, but from some depraved Constitution of the Body, which stifles and suppresses those Desires, for want of that Moisture and Heat that should nourish them; and that Conscience hath no more to do in the Conquest, than Courage hath

an Operation in him who takes an Enemy Prisoner who lies prostrate at his Feet: Whereas all those, and other Diseases of the Mind, for Diseases they are, are much more curable than those of the Body, and so much the more as they are most subject to our own Administration; when we must resort to the Skill and Ability of other Men to devise and compound proper Remedies for the other Cure. Many Accidents of Heat or Cold or Diet, or the very Remedies prescribed, very often make the Diseases of the Body incurable, and the Recovery impossible; whereas the Application to the Mind, tho' unskilfully and unseasonably made, does no Harm if it does no Good, and the Mind remains still as capable of the same or other Medicines as it was before. Nor is there any enormous or unruly Infirmary so annexed to or rooted in our Nature, but that the like hath been frequently sever'd from or eradicated out of it, by virtuous and conscientious Precepts and Practice; and every Man's Observation and Experience supplies him with Examples enough, of Men far from Sobriety, who, to comply with some Infirmary, have forborn all Wine and Intemperance for some Months; and of others of no restrain'd Appetites, who, upon the Obligation of a Promise or virtuous Resolution, have abstained a longer Time from any Acts of Uncleaness: And whosoever can impose such a Law upon himself for so many Months, can do the same for so many Years; a firm and magnanimous Resolution can exercise that Discipline upon the Mind, that it shall never make any Excursions from Reason and good Behaviour. If they can be brought but *laborem ferre cogitandi*, the worst is over, and their Recovery is not desperate.

Since then it is and may be made evident enough, that the greatest Infirmities and Deformities of the Mind may be reformed and rectified by Industry and reasonable Applications, there can be but one Reason why there is so little used in those Cases, since all Men desire to be wise, or to be reputed wise; and that is, that there is no need of it: Nature's Store and Provision is sufficient; Conversation with witty Men, and an ordinary Observation of the Current and Conduct of Business, will make Men as wise as they need to be; and the Affectation of Books doth but introduce Pedantry into the Manners of Men, and make them impertinent and troublesome; that Men of great Learning in Books are frequently found to be the most incompetent Judges or Advisers in the most important Transactions of the Affairs of the World, and of the Interest of States. And by this unreasonable jolly Discourse, and Contempt of the learned Languages, there seems to be a Combination enter'd into against Learning, and against any such Education as may dispose them to it; as if the excellent Endowments of Nature would be eclipsed by reading Books, and would hinder them from learning more in the Company they might keep than they can obtain from other, and that the other Method makes them Men much sooner: And upon this Ground, which hath gotten too much Countenance in the World, the Universities and Inns of Court, which have been the Seminaries out of which our Ancestors have grown to be able to serve their Country with great Reputation and Success, are now declined as Places which keep hopeful Youth too long Boys, and infect them with Formalities and impertinent Knowledge, of which they shall have little Use, and send them out late and less prepared for and inclined to those generous Qualifications, which are most like to raise their Fortunes and their Reputations. Which sure is a very great Error, and hath been the Source from whence many Mischiefs have flowed. And to speak first of this extolled Breeding in good Company, and Travel into Foreign Parts before they know any thing of their

their own Country ; and getting the Vice and the Language of that, before they can secure themselves from the one, or understand their own native Tongue ; we have the Knowledge and Experience of many, who have indeed the Confidence and Presumption of Men, but retain the Levity and Folly of Children : And if they are able to disguise those Weaknesses, and appear in their Behaviour and Discourse earlier Men than others of their Age seem to be, (as it many Times falls out, especially in Men endowed with any Principles of Modesty,) yet those very early Men decay apace, for want of Nourishment at the Roots ; and we too frequently see those who seem Men at Twenty Years of Age, when the Gaiety of their Youth decays, and themselves grow weary of those Exercises and Vanities which then became them, become Boys at Thirty ; having no Supply of Parts for Business, or grave and sober Conversation, they then grow out of Love with themselves, and too soon lament those Defects and Impotency in themselves, which nothing but some Degree of Learning and Acquaintance with Books could have prevented. And to say that they can fall to it afterwards, and recover the Time they have lost when they will, is no more reasonable (though there have been some very rare Examples of such Industry) than to imagine that a Man, after he is Forty Years of Age, may learn to dance as well as if he had begun it sooner. He who loves not Books before he comes to Thirty Years of Age, will hardly love them enough afterwards to understand them. The Conversation with wise and good Men cannot be over-valued ; it forms the Mind and Understanding for noble and heroical Undertakings, and is much to be preferred before the meer learning of Books, in order to be wise ; but where a good Foundation of the Knowledge and Understanding of Books is first laid, to support the excellent Superstructure of such Conversation, the Advance must be made much more advantageously, than when nothing but the ordinary Endowments of Nature are brought to be cultivated by Conversation ; which is commonly chosen with Men of the same Talents, who gratify one another with believing that they want not any extraordinary Improvement, and so join together in censuring and condemning what they do not understand, and think that Men have only better Fortune than they who have got Credit, without being in any Degree wiser than themselves.

It is very true, there have been very extraordinary Men in all Nations, who by their great Experience, and a notable Vivacity of Spirit, have not only attained to eminent Promotion, but have been exceedingly worthy of it ; albeit they have been upon the Matter illiterate, as to the learning of Books and the learned Languages : But then they have been eminently industrious ; who having had the good Fortune to be educated in constant Labour, under wise and experienced Men, have, by indefatigable Pains and Observation, gotten the learning of Business without the learning of Books, and cannot properly be accounted illiterate, though they know little *Latin* or *Greek*. We speak of Books and Learning, not of the Language in which they are writ. The *French* and the *Italian* and the *Spanish* have many excellent Books of all Kinds ; and they who are well versed in those Languages, may be very learned, though they know no others : And the truth is, the *French*, whether by the Fertility of their Language, or the happy Industry of many excellent Persons, have translated most good Authors both of the *Greek* and *Latin*, with that admirable Facility, that little of the Spirit and Vigour even of the Style of the best Writers is diminished ; an Advantage the *English* Industry and Curiosity hath not yet brought home to that Nation : They who have performed that Office hitherto,

therto, for the most part, having done it for Profit, and to live, without any Delight in the Pains they take; and though they may have had some competent Knowledge of the Language out of which they have translated, have been very far from understanding their own Mother-Tongue, and being versed in the fruitful Productions of the *English* Language. But tho' Learning may be thus attained by many Nations in their own proper Dialect, and the Language of their own Country; yet few Men who take the Pains to search for it in their own, but have the Curiosity to look into the Original, and are conversant in those which are still, and still will be, called the Learned Languages; nor is yet any Man eminent for Knowledge and Learning, that was not conversant in other Tongues besides his own: and it may be those two necessary Sciences, that is, the Principles of them, Grammar and Logick, can very hardly be so well and conveniently taught and understood as by *Latin*. It shall serve my Turn, and I shall willingly comply with and gratify our beloved modern Education, if they take the Pains to read good Books in that Language they understand best and like most; I had almost said, if they will read any Books, be so much alone as Reading employs; if they will take as much Pains to be wise and polish their Minds, as they do to order and dispose their Clothes and their Hair; if they will put that Constraint upon themselves in order to be learned, as they do to attain to a Perfection in any bodily Exercise; and lastly, which is worth all the rest, if they will as heartily endeavour to please God, as they do those for whom they have no great Affection, every Great Man whose Favour they solicit; and affect being good Christians, as much as they do to be fine Gentlemen; they shall find their Labour as much less, as their Reward and Recompence will be greater. If they will not do this, they must not take it ill if it be believed, that they are without Knowledge that their Souls are to out-live their Bodies; and that they do not so much wish to go to Heaven, as to get the next Bet at Play, or to win the next Horse-Race they are to run.

To conclude: If Books and Industry will not contribute to their being wise, and to their Salvation, they will receive from it (which they value more) Pleasure and Refreshment in this World; they will have less Melancholy in the Distress of their Fortune, less Anxiety in the Mortification of Sickness; they will not so much complain for want of Company, when all their Companions forsake them; their Age will be less grievous unto them; and God may so bless it, without any Intention of their own, that such Thoughts may insensibly insinuate themselves into them, that they may go out of the World with less dismal Apprehensions, and conclude their neglected Lives with more Tranquility of Spirit, at least not be so much terrified with the Approach of Death, as Men who have never entertained any sober Thoughts of Life have used to be, and naturally must be.

Of impudent Delight in Wickedness.

IF it be too great a Mastery to pretend to, over our own Passions and Affections, to restrain them from carrying us into any unlawful Desire, and from suffering that Desire to hurry us into some unlawful Action, which is less Perfection than every good Christian is obliged to endeavour to arrive at; if some Sin knock so loud and so impetuously at our Breast, or our Blood, that it even forces its Entrance, in spite of any Resistance we can make for the present, let it at least find such a Reception as we would give to an Enemy, who doth in truth enter into our Habitation by Force, tho' he doth subdue us; let it not have the Entertainment of a Friend, of a Companion for whose Presence we were solicitous: If we want Power and Strength to reject it, let us dismiss it with such a Rudeness, that it may not promise it a better Welcome and Reception. It was some Degree of Modesty in Job's Adulterer, (xxiv. 25.) when his *Eye waited for the Twy-light, saying, No Eye shall see me, and disguised his Face*, that he was so far ashamed of the Sin he acted, that he desired to conceal the Suspicion of it from other Men; though he had the Guilt within himself, he abhorred the being made an Example to corrupt others. Whilst there is any Shame remaining upon the Spirit of a Transgressor, any Blush discovers itself after the Guilt, there is hope of the subduing and conquering that Temptation; and that at last it may grow to such a Detestation of the Transgression itself, and of himself for transgressing, that it may even recover his lost Innocence, that is, repair the State and Integrity of it. The most severe Philosopher, who thought Humane Nature strong enough to suppress and extinguish all Temptation, had yet great Compassion for him *qui adhuc peccare erubescit*; he thought it worth the Care of Philosophy itself, *ut nutriendus esset hic pudor*, that this Disinclination and Bashfulness towards Vice should be so cherished and nourished, that it should not discover itself to be discerned under any other Notion than of pure Virtue, till it recovered Strength enough to be so; and without doubt, whilst this Bashfulness possesses any Place in us, till the Custom and Malice of Sin hath totally subdued the Shame for Sinning, there is a War kept up that may drive Sin from every Corner and Angle of our Hearts: And it may be, there have not been more Men recovered and reformed by the Counsels and Animadversions of others, than by their own severe Recollections, and Reflections upon their own Transgressions, and their own Observations of the Nature and Insinuation of Sin, and of the Unquietness and Uneasiness of it, even when it is complied with, and of the Restlessness and Importunity of it after it is satisfied; *Ipsæ voluptates eorum tepidæ & variis terroribus inquietæ sunt, subitque cum maximè exultant sollicita expectatio, hæc quam diu?* They who hearken to the Voice of their own Consciences, and take Notice of the Reluctance of their own Spirit in the very Moment they enjoy the Pleasures they most delight in, need no other Remembrancers, and easily disentangle themselves from all its Allurements. But alas! we live in an Age wherein Vice is not taught so perfunctorily, as to be in Danger to be dislodged after it is once entred and received; the Devil is too good a Husband, to venture a beloved Sin upon a Constitution capable of being ashamed of his Guests; he secures himself in that Point, by choosing such Proselytes as will first brag of having committed some notorious Sins, before he admits them to the Pleasure and Guilt of them, that so the

Shame of being discovered to be Lyars may harden their Faces against all other Shame; the Fame of being eminently wicked hath mastered and suppressed the Infamy of it; and many would rather be without the Pleasure of the Sins they most delight in, than without the Pleasure of publishing and bragging of them after the Commitment; as if there would be too much Innocence left, if there should not be an equal Proportion of Impudence planted in its Place. This is it which makes us excel in all Lewdness, and our Youth Doctors in those Faculties of Wickedness, which were understood in former Times by some few discarded Ruffians, who were banished the Conversation of Mankind, and of the Sun itself. We travel into Foreign Countries, not to improve our own Manners, but to learn the worst of theirs, and to transplant them carefully into our own Climate; where we cultivate and polish them, that we may excel all Nations in their own peculiar Vices: And we have so much Modesty, as to suspect that our own Fancy and Invention is not fertile enough to contribute Improvement enough to them; and so bring them into Conference and Conversation with more experienced Gamesters, that we may be sure to make the most of them, and imp them out with Texts of Scripture with all Prophaness and Blasphemy, that there may appear no want of Deliberation and Industry in the Progress we have made towards Hell and Damnation.

It were very well for Christianity if there were half that Reverence reserved for Religion, that the Philosopher was assured would be always paid to that Science which indeed he looked upon as Religion, and defined it to be wonderful like it; *Nunquam in tantum convalescet, nunquam sic contra Virtutes conjurabitur, ut non Philosophiae nomen, venerabile & sacrum maneat*: And indeed, this Modesty and Respect to or for Religion was never so near rooted out of the Hearts of Men, since the Name of Religion was first heard of in the World, as it is in the present Age and present Practice in most Nations which call themselves Christians; when Poetry itself doth not administer so frequent Occasions of Mirth as Religion doth; nor are the Sayings of the Poets so often applied to the most scurrilous and prophane Exercises of Wit, as the Scripture itself is; nor indeed is any Wit so grateful and acceptable as that which is so polluted: So that it is no Breach of Charity, to believe that too many read the Scripture, and very industriously, only that they may be readier to apply not only the Phrase and Expressions, but the highest Mysteries contained in the whole Body of the Scripture, to the most wicked, prophane and scurrilous and blasphemous Subjects. Nor will they take it ill to have this believed of them, the Number and Quality of the Offenders carrying before it an Impunity for the Offence; so that there may shortly be too much reason to fear that it may be dangerous to let the Kingdom know *quanto plures mali sint*; since as the same Philosopher observed, *pudorem rei tollit multitudo peccantium, & desinit esse probri loco, commune maledictum*. It is high time for the Sovereign Power to be very vigilant and severe, when such Conspiracies and Combinations grow so strong; nor can there be a greater Manifestation of the Contempt of the Government, than when great and notorious Vices obtain Credit and Reputation.

Of DRUNKENNESS.

THAT Drunkenness is a Sin of very great Antiquity, needs no other Evidence, than that for ought appears it was the first Sin that was committed after the Flood; and it may be, the first Punishment that was inflicted upon it, was the best proportioned to the Crime; and if it had been ever prosecuted upon the Continuance and Propagation of it since, it is probable that Vice had not flourished in so many Ages to this Time, when it remains more strong and vigorous, and in more Credit and Reputation, than it had in its Beginning; because it hath not the same Penalty inflicted upon it since, which was, a Mockery and Contempt. Not that Mockery which is now so much applied to it, and by which it is cherished and propagated by Mirth and Laughter, and looking upon it as a commendable, at least, a pardonable Effect of Good-fellowship: It was another kind of Mocking which God prescribed, by permitting, when he made the first drunken Man (who had been so much in his Favour) to become by it ridiculous to his own Son, and permitted his own Child unnaturally to condemn his Father; as if it were but Justice, that his own Flesh and Blood should withdraw the Duty due to a Parent, who had divested himself of his Manhood to become a Beast. It was the Third Part of the World that then manifested this Contempt towards that excessive Debauchery, and the other Two Parts did but conceal it: And though the Presumption in so near a Relation as a Son was not excusable, his Piety cannot justify such a Contempt; yet the Contempt itself, as it was the first, so it is the best and most sovereign Remedy that the Wisdom of a State can prescribe for the suppressing and eradicating that Enormity, that a dissolute and a drunken Man be looked upon with Scorn, and as unworthy to be received into the Company or Employment of honest and virtuous Persons; that he who delights to degrade himself from being a reasonable Creature, be degraded from the Capacity of exercising any Office, for the Support whereof the Use of Reason is constantly necessary; and that he be exposed to a universal Contempt, who exposes himself to discredit his Creation, and to drive that reasonable Soul from him that only distinguishes him from a Beast. And till this peculiar Penalty be, by a general Consent of all worthy Men as well as Magistrates, applied to this Race of impudent Transgressors, this affected Wickedness will never be extirpated, but involve whole Nations in the Infamy, though particular Men may be free from the Guilt of the Excess. The succeeding Stages of the World never found so proper a Remedy for this Malady, though something was always done to make it odious and terrible to those who affected it. By the *Levitical* Law, if the Father and the Mother did bring their Son before the Elders of the City, and say, This our Son is a Glutton and a Drunkard, all the Men of the City shall stone him with Stones that he die; yet this Severity did not root out that Vice from that People, Excess of Wine still wrought the same Effects: And it is probable, the Severity of the Law made Men less solicitous for the Execution of it; Parents chose rather to keep a drunken Son than to have no Son at all, to have him put to Death; and an Excess of Rigour in the Punishment, rather makes Faults to be carefully concealed, than not to be committed. And this may be the reason that in the Time of *Solomon*, who, amongst his Multitude of Vices, we do not find was given to Drunkenness, a less severe Judgment was denounced against

gainst it, yet more like to reform it: *The Drunkard and the Glutton shall come to Poverty*, says he, (*Prov. xxiii. 21.*) Let but that be made good, and the Cure is wrought; no Man ever affected a Vice that he believed would inevitably make him a Beggar; the Gamester, who most naturally falls into it, is very solicitous to avoid it, and plays that he may be rich; and the lustful Person, though he may fear Diseases, sees no Cause to apprehend Poverty, by giving Satisfaction to his Appetite. No vicious Man considers Heaven so much, as to foresee the Punishment that may fall from thence upon his Excesses; and therefore let *Solomon* pronounce what he will, the Drunkard will never be terrified with the Fear of Beggary, whilst he sees rich and great Men affected with the same Pleasure with which he is delighted and reproached, and to whom it may be he stands more commended by his Faculty in Drinking than he would be by the Practice of any particular Virtue. Nor can the publick Laws and Penalties of any State execute *Solomon's* Sentence, and reduce those riotous Transgressors to Poverty, whilst the Magistrates and great Ministers, without whole Influence those dead Laws have no Vigour, are accustomed to the same Excesses, or indulgent to those who are: They are so far from believing that they shall be the poorer by it, that they look upon it as the only Antidote that can expel the Poison of Poverty, and the only Remedy that can redeem and buoy them up from the Abyss into which the Melancholy of Want usually casts those who are in Distress: They think they have a Piece of Scripture more Canonical than *Solomon's* Practice, of the Verity whereof they have such real Experience in the Panegyrick they find in *Esdra's*, which, instead of being cast into Poverty, raised the poorest amongst them to the State and Condition of Kings; *Wine maketh the Mind of the King and of the fatherless Child to be all one, of the Bond-man and of the Free-man, of the poor Man and of the rich. It turneth also every Thought into Jollity and Mirth, so that a Man remembreth neither Sorrow nor Debt; and it maketh every Heart rich, so that a Man remembreth neither King nor Governour; and it maketh to speak all Things by Talents;* (*1 Esdr. iii. 19, 20, 21.*) And if in truth this Prerogative be confirmed by the Condescension of great Men to this Equality, in prostituting themselves to the same base Excess; if this rebellious Transportation of Jollity, and this pleasant Dream of Wealth and Security be not awaked by some severe and sensible Chastisement, the *Apocrypha* will be preferred as the truer Scripture, and Men will not by the Gravity (which they call the Morality) of a few sober Men be irreconciled with the Vice that brings them into so good Company, and in which they enjoy so many pleasant Hours.

We may reasonably believe, that in our Saviour's Time this unmanly Excess was grown to a very great Height, by the most terrible Judgment denounced against it by *St. Paul*, (*1 Cor. vi. 10.*) *That no Drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of God.* A Man must be in a perpetual Drunkenness, that doth not discern the Treachery of that Wine which raises that Mirth and Jollity, which makes him forget the King of Kings, and this inevitable Sentence that he must undergo for that Minute of contemptible Mirth to which he sacrifices his miserable Soul. What Remedy can God himself prescribe against our Destruction, if so plain and clear and unquestionable Determination cannot fright us from this unworthy and devouring Excess? And those Men must be very ambitious to be damned, who make Appointments, and meet to be drunk, that they may not be disappointed of the other. Nor can this desperate Appetite consist but in a Mind wholly possessed with Contempt of Heaven, and all Hope of Salvation: And yet *St. Paul*

Paul seems to resort to the old primitive Punishment as the most like to prevent this last unavoidable one, to try if Contempt and Disdain can draw Men from that which Hell-fire cannot terrify them from: *And now I have written unto you not to keep Company, if any Man that is called a Brother be a Drunkard, with such a one no, not to eat.* To be a Christian and a Drunkard was such a Contradiction, to put off the Man and retain the Christian, was such a Mockery, that he who affected it was not thought fit for any Part of human Society. It is not from Original Sin, or the corrupt Nature of Mankind, but from the Corruption of their Manners, from wicked and licentious Education, that Men are more afraid of any temporal Disgrace, any present Disadvantage than of eternal Punishment: They cannot be induced to believe that their Lives are near an End, whilst they enjoy Health and Vigour of Mind; and Damnation is a Thing so far off, and as they believe easy to be compounded for in the last Moment of Life, besides the putting it off by not thinking of it, the few Men displease themselves by any apprehension of it; and therefore it must be some present Uneasiness, some Incapacity upon Earth as well as in Heaven, that must magisterially reform Men from this noisome Malady. If as Persons over-grown with the Infection of Leprosy, they be excluded from the Courts of Princes and the Chambers of Great Men; if they were made incapable of any Dignity or Office, or of being admitted into the Company of Gentlemen, by a declared Reproach upon all who shall presume to keep them Company; if the Observation and Experience that Men of excellent Parts do, in few Years, become Fools by excessive Drinking, could prevail with others to believe that they shall, from the same Surfeits, be rendred inferior in their Understanding to all who are more temperate than they, and thereby grow unfit as well as unworthy for those Employments they pretend to; these Castigations and these Reflections might possibly make such Impression upon the Minds of those who are possessed with this Frenzy, together with a Combination of all noble and generous Persons against them, that this unchristian Brutality, which dishonours all Nations where it is permitted, would be rooted out, or confined to that abject sort of Men, which being abandoned by their own Lusts and Excesses, are not looked upon as a noble Part of any Christian Nation, but ranked amongst the Dregs of the People. And truly if such a Collection were made and published, as very many Mens own Experience and Observation can produce of the publick Mischief and Ruin that hath befallen States in the Discovery of Counsels, and the lessening and alienating the Affection and Reverence that is due to the Government, by this single Vice of Drunkenness; that hath befallen Armies, in having their Quarters beaten up, their Towns surprized, their Forts betrayed, and the whole Discipline that should preserve them dissolved by the pernicious Excess of Drink in the Generals and principal Officers; that hath befallen private Families, in the Quarrels, Breach of Friendship and Murders, which have had no other Original or Foundation but Drunkenness: Men could not but conclude, that it is a Sin that God is wonderfully offended with and a Scourge that he chastises all those with who are delighted in it, and would abhor both it and them proportionably, and that they can have no Peace with God or Man, who do not labour with all their Faculties to drive it out and keep it out of their Families, their Towns and Countries, with the same Vigilance and Severity as they use against the most devouring Plague and Pestilence that sweeps all before it.

It is too great an Indulgence to this Wickedness, it may be in some who are not guilty of it, and an Evidence that they do not abhor it enough, to

flay that the natural Temper and Constitution of Men is so different, that Wine works different Effects in them; and that it hath such an Insinuation into many, that it can as hardly be shut out as Flattery can, and infuses its Poison so subtilly that it hath wrought its Effects before it be discerned or suspected, and therefore could very hardly be prevented; that the same Excess which is visible in some Men to the loss of their Reason and other Faculties, is not discernible in others, nor makes the least Impression upon them; that it never produces any mischievous Effect in many, and so cannot be at least in the same Degree sinful in all Men; and lastly, that it is a Part of Conversation from which Men cannot retire rudely, and they who are once entred into it, especially if it be with Persons superior to themselves, and upon whom they have some Dependence, can very hardly refuse to submit to the Laws they prescribe for the present, or withdraw from that Excess which they do not like, nor must presume to censure or contradict. It is great pity that our Saviour nor his Disciples had not the Foresight to discern these Distinctions and casual Obligations, that they might not so positively have shut out all Transgressors, who may have so reasonable Excuses for the Excesses they commit, from any Hope of Salvation; but it is much more pity that any Men, who pretend to pay Submission and Obedience to his Injunctions, and to believe and give Credit to his Dictates, should delude themselves and others with such vain and impious Imaginations, and hope to avoid a Judgment that is so unavoidably pronounced, by such weak Excuses as cannot absolve Men from the most trivial and lightest Trespases. Cannot he that wisely declines walking upon the Ice for fear of Falling, though possibly it might carry him sooner to his Journey's End, as wisely forbear drinking more Wine than is necessary for fear of being drunk and the ill Consequences thereof? Is there any Man so intemperate as to drink to an Excess, when his Physician assures him it will increase his Fever, though he hath a better Excuse then from his Thirst, or improve some other Disease the Strength whereof already threatens him with Death? Can we be temperate that we may live a Month the longer, which at best we cannot be sure of; and will not the Fear of eternal Death make any Impression upon us? There is not in the whole Catalogue of Vices to which Mankind is liable, any one (Swearing only excepted) that hath not more Benefit as well as Pleasure for its Excuse and Reward: The revengeful and malicious Person finds some Ease and Advantage from having brought some signal Misfortune upon his Enemy; others will be more wary how they displease and provoke him: The covetous Man is a great Gainer by his pursuit, and is able if he were willing, to do much good with what he hath gotten ill: The lustful Person finds Ease, by having quenched or rather allayed a Fire that burned him, and which a sudden Reflection or sharp Animadversion could not extinguish. The Drunkard only hath none of these Pretences for his Excess, none of these deceitful Pleasures in the Exercise of it; no Man was ever drunk to quench his Thirst, or found other Delight in it than in becoming less a Man than God hath made him; which must be a horrible Deformity, and disguise him from the Knowledge of God. They who can perform the Office of strong Beasts, in carrying more Drink than others can, should be put to carry it the same way they do, which would be much more innocent; and their Strength doth but deceive them, and decays to all noble Purposes, when it seems exalted in that base and servile Work. Besides, it may be the Guilt of his weak Companion, who falls sooner under his Hand, is inferior, how penal soever, to his who triumphs in his brutish unwounded Conquest, and

and believes he is less drunk, because he is not so much dead. They who apply their Power and Quality to the Propagation of this unmanly and unruly Licence, and draw Men from obeying or considering Heaven, to please them, are fit to be degraded from that Qualification they so dishonourably prostitute, and to be condemned to that Conversation they so much affect; and they, who out of Modesty and Good Manners, out of Gratitude and Obedience, are disposed to submit to those Commands, ought well to consider, that they do at the same time renounce their Christian Liberty, and enter into a Servitude which hath no Bounds or Limits: For with what Security or Reason can he refuse to perform the lowest and the basest Office that Man shall require him, upon whose Command he hath been content to be drunk? That he is not a Pandar, that he is not an Assassinator, that he is not a Rebel, is not to be imputed to any Restraint in or from his own Conscience, but to the Temper and Constitution of his Patron, which doth not invite him to those Debaucheries; for to say that Honour and the Law makes those much more penal than the other, so that his Commands can more easily be disputed and contradicted in those Cases, is no Excuse; for where the Conscience lies waste, and all regard to God's Law is rejected, Obedience to the Law of Man, is no otherwise retained than in order to prevent Discovery; and where the Penalty may be declined or eluded, the Impiety makes no Impression: so that he who hath barefaced, and upon Deliberation, violated any one of God's express Commandments, hath given Earnest to the Devil that he will break any of the rest, when the like Opportunity and Convenience shall be offered.

It is yet much more wonderful that there should be any Christian Government, in which there are no Laws established to punish this damnable Sin; and that there should be such a Compassion for it, that the same Crime, even Homicide itself, that is committed by a sober Man is punishable with Death, should not be penal to a Man that is in Drink: as if the Guilt of one Sin should be absolved by the being guilty of another; and that, when under the Law, Drunkenness was punished with Death, under the Gospel it should excuse a Murderer from Death, who by the Law and the Gospel ought not to be suffered to live; that a Circumstance of high Aggravation should be applied to the Mitigation of a Censure, that ought to be the more severe; nay, even to constitute such an Innocence as is not worthy of a Censure. The Philosopher can assure us, *Non facit ebrietas vitia, sed protrahit*, Drunkenness doth but produce and manifest the Malice that lay concealed, creates it not; *Vis vini quicquid mali latebat emergit*, Wine infuses no ill Desires, it only makes those appear which lay hid; it publishes what the Heart hath entertained, and makes Vice more impudent than was as mischievous before: The licentious Person doth then that in the Streets, which he doth at other times in his Chamber; and because he upbraids Justice aloud and provokes it, he must be unchastis'd, and only admonished that he be more wary in his Excesses. What is this but to cherish and foment an Abomination, against which no less Judgment than that of Hell-Fire is denounced? There is not in the whole Body of the Civil Law one Text that declares Drunkenness to be a Crime, or that provides a Punishment for it; on the contrary, *Ebriis quandoque venia dari solet delinquentibus, tanquam sepultis, & nescientibus*, Pardon is rather given to such Offenders, as to Persons buried, and not knowing what they do: And Calvin says expressly, *Jure nostro pœna minuitur, quod in ebrio dolus abesse putetur*; it is the Privilege of a Drunkard to be less punished than

than other Men, because he is supposed to mean no harm. And that we may not impute this monstrous Indulgence to the Easiness and Corruption of the Judges, the *Digests* have an express Text, (Li. 49. Titu. 16.) *per vinum & lasciviam lapsis capitalis pœna remittenda est*, a capital Punishment must not be inflicted upon those who are criminal through Wine or Lust: which must be an excellent Law to govern Nations by. And yet the latter may seem to be more excusable than the former, since it may proceed from the Impulsion of Nature; whereas the other is affectedly and industriously entered upon with the Nautiating and Aversion of Nature, and is purely the Effect of a malicious Appetite and Wantonness. What shall we say then to that which is most horrible, that in any Christian Country it should not be looked upon as a Sin, as an Offence that needs God's Forgiveness? In *Germany*, they are not obliged to confess being drunk, as if Sobriety were a Christian Virtue inconsistent with the Health and Temper of the Nation, and the contrary necessary to be dispensed with for the Publick Good and Benefit. We may surely say, that Christianity hath not done its perfect Work in that Country, how Catholick soever it is; that wherever that Sin is permitted, Christ is not sufficiently preached; and where it is cherished and countenanced, neither his Apostles or himself are credited or believed; that no Integrity of Opinion can absolve the Guilt of that Practice; and we may as reasonably presume of Salvation upon the Faith of the *Alcoran*, as with the Exercise of this brutish Sin, against which Damnation is so positively denounced.

Of ENVY.

MONTPELLIER, 1670.

IF Envy, like Anger, did not burn itself in its own Fire, and consume and destroy those Persons it possesses, before it can destroy those it wishes worst to, it would set the whole World on Fire, and leave the most excellent Persons the most miserable. Of all the Affections and Passions which lodge themselves within the Breast of Man, Envy is the most troublesome, the most restless, hath the most of Malignity, the most of Poyson in it. The Object she hath an immortal Hatred to, is Virtue; and the War she makes, is always against the best and virtuous Men, at least against those who have some signal Perfection. No other Passion vents itself with that Circumspection and Deliberation, and is in all its Rage and Extent in awe of some Controul. The most cholerick and angry Man may offend an honest and a worthy Person, but he chuses it not; he had rather provoke a worse Man, and at worst he recollects himself upon the Sight of the Magistrate. Lust, that is blind and frantick, gets into the worst Company it can, and never assaults Chastity. But Envy, a more pernicious Affectation than either of the other, is inquisitive, observes whose Merit most draws the Eyes of Men upon it, is most crowned by the general Suffrage; and against that Person he shoots all his Venom, and without any Noise enters into all unlawful Combinations against him to destroy him: Though the high Condition *Solomon* was in kept him from feeling the Effects of it, (for Kings can only be envied by Kings,) he well discovered the uncontrollable Power of it; *Wrath is cruel, and Anger is outrageous; but who can stand before Envy?* (Prov. xxvii. 6.) Let Wrath be as cruel as it will, a stronger Wrath can disarm it, or Application and Address can pacify it;

fair

fair Words hath Power over it, and let Anger be never so outrageous, it can be resisted, and will extinguish itself: They both give fair Warning, are discovered afar off, and we have Time to fight or fly; but Envy hath no fixed open Residence, no Man knows where it dwells, nor can discern when it marches; it is a *Squadroni Volante*, that declares no War, but breaks into our Quarters when we do not suspect it to be near us, wounds our Reputation, stifles the Brightness of our Merit, and works even upon our Friends to suspend their good Opinion, and to doubt whether they are not deceived, and whether we are as good as we appear to be. If our Credit be so well built, so firm, that it is not easy to be shaken by Calumny and Insinuation, it then over-commends us, and extols us beyond Reason to those upon whom we depend, till they grow jealous; and so blow us up when they cannot throw us down. There is no Guard to be kept against Envy, because no Man knows where it dwells; and generous and innocent Men are seldom jealous and suspicious till they feel the Wound, or discern some notorious Effect of it. It shelters itself for the most part in dark and melancholy Constitutions, yet sometimes gets into less suspected Lodgings, but never owns to be within when it is asked for. All other Passions do not only betray and discover, but likewise confess themselves; the cholerick Man confesses he is angry, and the proud Man confesses he is ambitious; the covetous Man never denies that he loves Money, and the Drunkard confesses that he loves Wine: but no envious Man ever confessed that he did envy; he commands his Words much better than his Looks, and those would betray him, if he had not bodily Infirmities apparent enough, that those of the Mind cannot easily be discovered, but in the Mischief they do. Envy pretends always to be a Rival to Virtue, and to court Honour only by Merit, and never to be afflicted but on the behalf of Justice, when Persons less meritorious come to be preferr'd; and it is so far true, that it seldom assaults unfortunate Virtue, and is as seldom troubled for any Success, how unworthy soever, that doth not carry a Man farther than the envious Man himself can attain to; he envies and hates, and would destroy every Man who hath better Parts or better Fortune than himself; and that he is not a Witch, proceeds only from the Devil's want of Power, that he cannot give him illustrious Conditions, for he hath more Pride and Ambition than any other sort of Sinner.

Of PRIDE.

MONTPELLIER, 1669.

THE Beginning of Pride is when one departeth from God, and his Heart is turned away from his Maker, says the Son of Sirach, x. 12. It is no wonder that a proud Man despiseth his Neighbour, when he is departed from his God; and since he is so, it is no less a wonder that he doth all he can to conceal himself: and he hath oftentimes very good Luck in doing it; and as few Men ever acknowledge themselves to be proud, so they who are so are not easily discovered. It is a Pride as gross and as ridiculous as Folly itself, which appears and exposes itself to the Eyes of all Men; it is a Guest that no body seems willing to harbour, and yet it finds Entrance and Admission and Entertainment in the Breasts of all Men as well as Women; it is a Weed that grows in all Soils and Climates, and is no less luxuriant in the Country than in the Court; is not confined to any Rank of Men or Extent of Fortune, but ranges in the Breasts of all Degrees. *Alexander* was not prouder than *Diogenes*; and it may be, if we would endeavour to suprise it in its most gaudy Dress and Attire, and in the Exercise of its full Empire and Tyranny, we should find it in Schoolmasters and Scholars, or in some Country Lady, or the Knight her Husband; all which Ranks of People more despise their Neighbours, than all the Degrees of Honour in which Courts abound: And it rages as much in a sordid affected Dress, as in all the Silks and Embroideries which the Excess of the Age and the Folly of Youth delight to be adorned with. Since then it keeps all sorts of Company, and wriggles itself into the liking of the most contrary Natures and Dispositions, and yet carries so much Poyson and Venom with it, that it alienates the Affections from Heaven, and raises Rebellion against God himself; it is worth our utmost Care to watch it in all its Disguises and Approaches, that we may discover it in its first Entrance, and dislodge it before it procures a Shelter or retiring Place to lodge and conceal itself. Since God himself makes War against it; *Pride and Arrogance, and the evil Way, and the froward Mouth, do I hate*, says the Spirit of God; (*Prov. viii. 13.*) since when Pride comes, then cometh Shame, nay then cometh Destruction; we cannot be too solicitous that this declared destroying Foe doth not steal upon us unawares, for want of Centinels, for want of knowing him before he crowds in. Let us therefore take as exact a Survey as we can what Pride in truth is: In the Disquisition whereof, because we find that they who entertain it most, and are most possessed by it, use all the Endeavours and Art they can to conceal it best; and that they who are least infected or corrupted by it, are oftentimes suspected to have it most; it will not be amiss, in the first Place, to consider the Negative, what is not Pride, that so often deceives the Standers-by, that we may the better illustrate the Affirmative, in the stating what Pride indeed is, that is so little suspected sometimes, that it escapes all but very vigilant Observations upon the most strict and sharpest Examination.

The outward Preservation of Mens Dignity, according to their several Qualities and Stations they hold in the World, by their Birth or Office, or other Qualification, is not Pride. The Peace and Quiet of Nations cannot be preserved without Order and Government; and Order and Government cannot

cannot be maintained and supported, without Distinction and Degrees of Men, which must be subordinate one to the other: Where all are equal, there can be no Superiority; and where there is no Superiority, there can be no Obedience; and where there is no Obedience, there must be great Confusion, which is the highest Contradiction and Opposition of Order and Peace; and the keeping those Bounds and Fences strictly and severely, and thereby obliging all Men to contain themselves within the Limits prescribed to them, is very well consisting with the greatest Humility, and therefore can be no Discovery or Symptom of Pride. And it may be, the most diabolical Pride may not more inhabit in the Breasts of any sort of Men, than of those who are forward to stoop, from the Dignity they ought to uphold, to a mean and low Condescension to inferior Persons; for all Pride being a Violation of Justice, it may be presumed, or reasonably suspected, that he that practises that Injustice towards himself hath his Ambition complied with, and satisfied by some unworthy Effects from such Condescension. I do not say, that these necessary Distances and Distinctions and Precedencies are always exercised without Pride; but that they may be so and ought to be so. No doubt, Men who are in the highest Stations, and have a Preheminence over other Men, and are bound to exercise that Superiority over those Men who it may be have been better Men than they, and deserve still to be so, to constrain them to perform their Duty, which they ought to do without Constraint, have great Temptations, especially if they have vulgar Minds, to be proud; and ought to take great Care, by their gentle and modest Behaviour in their Conversation, by doing all the Offices which Charity or Courtesy invite them to, and by executing that most rigid Part of their Obligation, which obliges them to punish corrupt Men and corrupt Manners, without the least Arrogance or Insolence towards their Persons, as if he were well pleased with the Opportunity; which is in truth as if he could satisfy publick Justice and his particular Malice together, which are inconsistent, and cannot but be the Effect and Product of great Pride in his Heart, and he is not glad that he can do Justice so much, as that he takes Revenge upon a guilty Person that he doth not love. The Seat of Pride is in the Heart, and only there; and if it be not there, it is neither in the Looks, nor in the Cloaths. A Cloud in the Countenance, a Melancholy and Absence of Mind, which detains a Man from suddenly taking Notice of what is said or done, very often makes a Man thought to be proud, who is most free from that Corruption; and the Excess in Cloaths may be some Manifestation of Folly or Levity, but can be no Evidence of Pride: For first, the particular Quality and Condition of Men may oblige them to some Cost and Curiosity in their Cloaths; and then the very affecting a Neatness and Expence of decent Habit, (if it does not exceed the Limits of ones Fortune,) is not only very lawful, and an innocent Delight, but very commendable; and Men, who most affect a Gallantry in their Dress, have Hearts too chearful and liberal to be affected with so troublesome a Passion as Pride, which always possesses itself of the Heart, and branches itself out into two very notable and visible Affections; which are, a very high and immoderate Esteem of themselves, and Admiration and Overvaluing of their own Parts and Qualities, and a Contempt of the Persons of other Men, and Disesteem and Undervaluing of all their Faculties and Endowments, how conspicuous soever to all others: and without both those Excesses, Pride will hardly be nourished to a monstrous Magnitude; but thus fed and cherished, out-grows all other Vices, and indeed comprehends them.

The

The Disesteem and Contempt of others is inseparable from Pride. It is hardly possible to overvalue ourselves, but by undervaluing our Neighbours; and we commonly most undervalue those, who are by other Men thought to be wiser than we are; and it is a kind of Jealousy in ourselves that they are so, which provokes our Pride; *Only by Pride cometh Contention*, says Solomon, (*Prov. xiii. 10.*) In truth, Pride is Contention itself, an insolent Passion that always contends, and contends for that which doth not belong to him who contends; contends by Calumny to rob another Man of his Reputation, of his good Name; contends by Force to extort that which another Man hath no mind to part with; and oftentimes contends by Fraud and Flattery to deprive a Man of what barefaced and by Force he could not compass; and does as much condemn a Man whom he hath couzened and deceived, as if he had by Courage overcome him; nay, he takes no Pleasure in the Good that is in him, otherwise than as it is set off and illustrated by the Infirmities of other Men: He doth not enjoy the Advantages Nature or Fortune have conferred upon him with that Relish, as when it brings a Prejudice to some others; he never likes his Wit so well, as when it makes his Companions, it may be his Friends, ridiculous; nor ever feels the Pleasure of his Fortune so much, as when it enables him to oppress his Neighbour: In the Pursuit of his Ambition, he had much rather obtain an Office that is promised to another, than one that is vacant to all Pretenders; to be preferred before another, how unreasonably or unjust soever, is a full Feast to his Pride, and a Warrant in his own Opinion ever after to prefer himself before all Men; and if he could have his Wish, he would see all Men miserable who have contended with him, and presumed to think themselves worthy of any Thing which he hath been content to accept: Whatever Benefits and Preferments other Men attain to, he imputes to their Fortune, and to the Weakness of those Men who contributed to it, out of want of Abilities to discover their Defects and Unworthiness; what is thrown upon himself, from the blind Affection and Bounty of his Superiors, he receives as a Reward below his Merit: He sees no Man discharge the Obligation of his Office and Trust, but he believes he could do it much better, and that it is Partiality not Justice that gives him a good Testimony; whereas if he comes to have any Province of his own to manage and govern, no Man does it with more Remissness or more Insufficiency; for he thinks it below the Estimation he would have all Men to have of his Parts, to ask Advice, or to receive it from any Man, who out of Kindness (which he calls Presumption) offers to give him any; and if he be so wise (as few proud Men are) as to profit by others, it is by a haughty way of asking Questions, which seem to question their Sufficiency rather than a Thought of improving his own; and he is still more inquisitive and takes more pains to discover the Faults which other Men commit in their Office, than to prevent or reform his own: With all his undervaluing other Men, he is far from condemning what others say of him, how unjust and untrue soever it is, but is grieved and afflicted that they dare do it, and out of fear that other Men would believe, and so neglect and condemn him too; for though he takes no other way to attain to it but by admiring himself, he doth heartily wish that all Men would likewise admire him. Pride, as it is compounded of the Vanity and ill Nature that disposes Men to admire themselves and to condemn other Men, (which is its genuine Composition) retains its Vigour longer than any other Vice, and rarely expires but with Life it self. Age wears out many other Vices, loses the Memory of Injuries and Provocations, and the Thought of Revenge is weary

weary of the Pursuits it hath already made, and so is without Ambition; it hath out-lived those Appetites and Affections which were most importunate for Satisfaction and most obstinate against Counsel, and so abhors both Lust and Surfeits; it seldom engenders Vice which it hath not been heretofore acquainted with: for that Covetousness which Men commonly think that Age is most liable to, is rather a Diminution of the Generosity and Bounty and Expence that Youth is naturally delighted with, and uses to exercise, than a sordid Appetite and Love of Money; and though it be the Season in which Men gather and collect most, and keep it by them when they have gathered it, it is (as was said before) because they know not how to spend it, and the Bounty that was in their Nature is shrunk and dried up, and they take no Pleasure in giving; besides, that Age is always apprehensive of Want, and therefore loves to be provided against all possible Accidents and Emergencies. But Pride finds a welcome and pleasant Residence in that parched Flesh and dried Bones, and exercises it self more imperiously, because it meets not with that Opposition and Contradiction which it usually finds in younger Company. Age, though it too often consists only in Length of Days, in having been longer than other Men, not in the Experiments of Life above those who are much younger, is naturally censorious, and expects Reverence and Submission to their white Hairs, which they cannot challenge to any Rudiments or Example which they have given to Virtue; and superciliously censure all who are younger than themselves, and the Vices of the present Time as new and unheard of, when in truth they are the very same they practised, and practised as long as they were able; they talk much of their Observation and Experience, in order to be obeyed in Things they understand not, and out of Vanity and Morosity contract a Pride that never departs from them whilst they are alive, and they die in an Opinion that they have left none wiser behind them, though they have left none behind them who ever had any Esteem of their Wildom and Judgment.

But when we have laid all the Reproaches upon it that it deserves, to make it odious to our selves and to all the World, and have raised all the Fences and Fortifications we can against it, to keep it from entring upon and into us; we have need still to have recourse to God Almighty, and to implore his Assistance in the guarding us from the Assaults of this bold Enemy; that he will preserve us from its Approaches when we most approach him, and when we are doing that which most pleases him; in those Seasons when we discharge our Duty with most Integrity, most Ability and most Reputation, that Men speak well of us, and speak but true, that he will then watch for us, that Pride steal not into our Hearts, and perswade us to think better of our selves than we ought to do; that he will take Care of us, when we take most Care of our selves to preserve our Innocence, and even in our most secret Devotions and Addresses to his Divine Majesty, that with the Serenity of Conscience which is naturally the Effect of such devout Addresses, no Information of Pride may enter into us to make us believe that we are better than other Men, which will quickly make us worse; that he will not suffer us to grow, from the Vices of others, because by his Grace we are yet without those Vices which they are transported with, proud of that which in truth is Virtue in us; that we be not exalted with our own Integrity, and neglect and despise those Applications and Condescensions, which are necessary in this World to the Support of the greatest Integrity and Innocence. The Pride of a good Conscience hath often exposed many Men to great Calamities, when they have too much

neglected the Friendships and Affections of others, it may be the better to preserve their Innocence; and so have been abandoned in the Time of powerful Calumny and Prosecution by those, who having Reverence for their Virtue, yet are without Kindness for their Persons, and so conclude that they are the less concerned for Justice, because they are not at all concerned for their Affection, or for any Obligation they have received. It is very necessary therefore, that they who do their Duty best, and have the greatest Evidence and Testimony of a good Conscience within their own Breasts, have likewise the greatest Care that they be not only not exalted with that Pride of Conscience, but that they be not suspected to be so; and it is great pity that so ill an Effect should proceed from so good a Cause; that the same Uprightness and Integrity, which raises naturally Jealousy and Envy and Malice in the Hearts of other Men, should deprive those who are possessed of it of all Wariness and Dexterity and Address, which is at least convenient for the Manifestation and Support of that Sincerity and Uprightness: *He is grievous unto us even to behold, for his Life is not like other Mens, his Ways are of another Fashion; let us examine him with Despiteness and Torture, that we may know his Meekness, and prove his Patience, (Wisdom Sol. ii. 15, 19.)* hath been the Doctrine and Practice of the World from Solomon's Time to the Age in which we live; and whilst this Conspiracy continues, the best Men will have need of good Friends and powerful Vindicators, which must be procured by private Correspondencies as well as publick Justice, and by private Obligations as an evident Inclination and Propensity to oblige; for whatever secret Veneration Virtue hath for it self even from the worst Men, it seldom finds Protection from the best.

We cannot be too jealous, we cannot suspect our selves too much to labour under this Disease, which cleaves the closer to us by our Belief or Confidence that we are quite without it. We may very properly say of Pride, as the Philosopher said of Flattery, *Apertis & propitiis auribus recipitur & in praeordia ima descendit; eo ipso gratiosa quod laedit*; it tickles when it hurts us, and administers some kind of Pleasure and Delight when it is even ready to destroy us. Few Men are displeased to hear themselves well spoken of, though it be to themselves; and many proud Men feel a kind of Satisfaction in being treated with Respect upon their Death-Bed, of which there have been many Instances. Nor can those deliberate Directions for the Form and Method of the Funeral, the Provision for Mourners, and the Structure of a Tomb, flow from any Thing in those Seasons, but from the Remainder of that Pride that will not expire before us. Whatever lawful Custom and Decency require, they who out-live us will provide for our Memory. It is very hard, at the same Time, to think of the Pomp of a Funeral, and humbly enough of the Carcass that is to be interred, of the Company it is to keep in the Grave, and of the Progeny of Worms that is to increase out of it. To conclude; Without the sovereign Influence of God's extraordinary and immediate Grace, Men do very rarely put off all the Trappings of their Pride, till they who are about them put on their Winding-Sheet.

Of ANGER.

MONTPELLIER, 1669.

HE that is slow to Anger is better than the Mighty, is an Observation as antient as Solomon's Time, (*Prov. xvi. 32.*) and hath been confirmed in all Ages since: He that can abstain from it, is Master of most Men, and seldom fails of any Design he proposes to himself. A Man that is undisturbed in what he goes about, will rarely be disappointed of his End: Whereas, on the contrary, Anger is the most impotent Passion that accompanies the Mind of Man; it effects nothing it goes about; and hurts the Man who is possess'd by it, more than any other against whom it is directed. It exposes to him to Laughter and Contempt, without any return in Satisfaction and Content, as most of the other Passions do; it is a barren and unfruitful Vice, and only torments him who nourishes it. The Philosopher thought it so useless a Passion, that he could not tell to what Service to apply it; he would by no means suffer it in Battles or Actions of War, where one might believe it might be of most Advantage, and carry Men to the utmost Daring, which is often very successful, and hath brought great and unexpected Things to pass; but he found that it did naturally degenerate into Rashness, *Et pericula dum inferre vult non cavet*; and that the prevalent Temper in those Enterprizes was, that *qui se diu tumultumque circumspexit, & rexit, & ex lento, & destinato provexit*, which Anger will never permit him. And surely, if it be not seasonable in those angry Contentions, it is much more inconvenient in the more calm Seasons of Business and Conversation: In Business, he rejects all that is proposed by other Men, and superciliously determines that his own Advice is to be followed; in Conversation he is full of unpeaceable Contradictions, and impatient at being contradicted; so that, though upon some Considerations, he be endured in Company, he is never desired or wished for. *An angry Man* (if you believe *Solomon*) *stirreth up Strife*; he can not only not be a Friend, but not suffer others to be so: it is not possible for him to be at Peace with others, when he hath a perpetual War with himself; People who are not like him, cannot or will not live with him; and if he be with those who are like him, neither of them can live long. *Seneca* thinks it a notable Argument to Men to avoid and suppress it, *non moderationis causa sed sanitatis*, because *ingentis iræ exitus furor est*; but the truth is, he doth Anger too much Honour who calls it Madness, which being a Distemper of the Brain, and a total Absence of all Reason, is innocent in all the ill Effects it may produce; whereas Anger is an affected Madness compounded of Pride and Folly, and an Intention to do commonly more Mischief than it can bring to pass: and without doubt of all Passions which naturally disturb the Mind of Man, it is most in our Power to extinguish, at least to suppress and correct our Anger.

That we may not flatter our selves with an Imagination that Anger may be commendable in us, and seem to have something of Injunction to support it in Scripture itself; we shall find it with a Restriction that quickly convinces us, that it is not of kin to our Anger: *Be angry, but sin not*. If we are sure that our Anger is only on God's behalf, for some Indignity done to him in the Neglect of his Service, or for the Practice of some Vice or Wickedness that he hath prohibited: If we are offended and feel some Commotions within us, in seeing loose and indecent Things done, and in hear-

hearing lascivious and prophane Things spoken; and break out into sharp and angry Reprehensions and Advice, where we may well do it; we shall never be ashamed of that Anger: If we can be angry and charitable together, and be willing to do good to him with whom we are most angry; we shall have no Cause to repent our Anger, nor others to condemn it. But we have too much Cause to doubt, that this warrantable Anger will not give us Content and Delight enough, to be affected with it; it will do us no good because it will do others no hurt, and so will give us no Credit with other Men. We shall do very well, if we do restrain and suppress and extinguish all other Anger, and are only transported with this. If we do not, and are angry only to grieve and terrify others, and therefore angry that they may be grieved and terrified, and not for any Thing that they have done amiss, but because we would not have had them done it; or if we suffer no Bounds or Limits to be prescribed to our Anger, be the Cause of it never so just and reasonable, by Decency, Reason and Justice; our Passion is thereby the more unjustifiable, by the Countenance we would draw to it from Divinity, and ought to be the more carefully extinguished and extirpated by our Shame and by our Repentance.

Of PATIENCE in ADVERSITY.

MONTPELLIER, 1669.

IF we considered seriously (and our Observation and Experience supplies every Man abundantly with Matter for those Considerations) the Folly and Madness and Inconvenience and Mischief of Passion and Impatience, the Pain and Agony that is begotten by it within our selves, and the Damage and Disreputation abroad with other Men, we should not need many Arguments to perswade us of the Benefit and Ease of Patience; and if we considered Patience only as a moral Virtue, as a natural Sobriety and Temper in subduing and regulating our Affections and Passions, as an Absence of that Anger and Rage and Fury which usually transports us upon ordinary and trivial Provocations, we could not but acknowledge the great Advantage Men have by it. *Solomon* seems to require nothing else to make a wise Man; *He that is slow to Anger, is of great Understanding*, Prov. xiv. 29. And indeed, there is nothing so much corrupts and destroys and infatuates the Understanding, as Anger and Passion; insomuch as Men of very indifferent Parts, by the Advantage of Temper and Composure, are much wiser, and fitter for great Actions, and are usually more prosperous, than Men of more subtle and sublime Parts, of more Quickness and Fancy, with the Warmth and Choler that many times attends those Compositions: *He that is hasty of Spirit exalteth Folly*, says *Solomon*, Prov. xiv. 29. that is, so improves his Folly, that he seems more foolish than in truth he is; he says Things he does not intend to say, and does Things he does not intend to do, and refreshes his Enemies with the Folly of his Anger: whereas the temperate unrash and dispassionate Man is always at home, and by being unmoved himself, discerns all Advantages whilst he gives none. *He that is slow to Anger is better than the Mighty, and he that ruleth his Spirit than he that taketh a City*, Prov. xvi. 32. One Translation renders it, *qui dominatur animo suo, expugnatur est urbium*; *he that can suppress his Passions is even the Master of all Cities, no Strength can resist him*. So that if we intended nothing but our own Ease and Benefit and Advantage, we have

have Reason to apply our selves to and study this Temper, in which the Precepts of the Philosophers give us ample Instructions, and the Practice of mere heathen Men have left us notable and envious Examples; But the Obligations of Christianity carry us much farther; we must add to Temperance Patience, which is a Christian Virtue of so high a Qualification, that *Tertullian* translates that Direction of our Saviour in the 21st Chapter of St. *Luke's Gospel*, Ver. 19. *In your Patience possess your Souls, Per tolerantiam salvos facietis vosmet-ipsos, You shall save your Souls by your Patience*; which if we could be perswaded in any degree to give Credit to, we would not so much indulge to that Licence of our impatient Humour, as we do upon the least accidental Crosses.

The Exercise of this necessary Christian Duty depends principally upon the attending and waiting God's own Time and Leisure for the receiving those Blessings, which, upon the Conscience of having according to our weak Abilities endeavoured to please him, we may confidently pray for and expect, and our humble and dutiful Submissions to such Afflictions and Calamities as he hath or shall lay upon us; for we must provide a Stock of Patience for the Crosses that may befall us: And from these two Branches of Patience, we may gather Fruit enough to refresh us throughout our whole Journey in this World. Toward the attaining the first, if we would ingenuously and faithfully consult our own Practice in Matters of this World, our own Rules of good Husbandry, we could not think this waiting and expecting God's Leisure, in the conferring his Blessings and Benefits, so grievous as it appears to us. How willing are we to lay out our Estates in the Purchase of Reversions, many times for somewhat that younger Men than our selves must die before we enjoy it; and if they out-live us, our Money is lost? And yet with the unreasonable Confidence that we shall hereafter enjoy it, and with the Comfort of that Expectation, we chearfully endure the present Wants and Delay. If we make any Suit to the King, or our Superiors, how well are we satisfied and contented, if we have the Promise of the Thing we ask a Year hence, when it is more than an even Lay that we live not till that Time, and there are in our View a thousand Contingencies which may disappoint us, if we do live so long? Nay, we choose rather, and we think there is a Merit in that Modesty, to ask somewhat that is to come, rather than any thing for the present. But we are not willing to lay out one Prayer, to disburse one innocent Act of our Life to God upon a Reversion. If we receive his Promise, we reckon every Day's Delay an Injury, though it be only a Promise for the future. So that, pretend what we will, and magnify what we can our Religion towards God, and our Confidence in him, we do in truth less believe and credit him, than any Friend or Companion we have. If we did otherwise, we should better observe his Precepts of Patience, and Reliance upon him; and believe, that as they, who can bear the present Want, in the End gain most who deal in Reversions; so if we would forbear our present Murmurings and Importunities, and stay the full Time, till the Interruptions (our own Sins or his Providence) cast in the Way, are worn out, we should in the End receive a large Interest for all our Expectation, and have Cause to magnify our Purchase; we should rather conclude, when we are disappointed, that the Conditions are broken on our part, which we are so unapt to perform, than that God hath broken his Promise, which he was never known to do; we should call to our Memory, that most of the Calamities which befall his own chosen People, proceeded from their own Murmurings and Impatience, and

that the least Impatience towards him, grows by degrees to an Infidelity in him, which we cannot endure to be thought guilty of: We should remember with what Disdain we look upon those who will not take our Word, which many times is not in our Power to keep, seldom in our Will; and yet we make no scruple to doubt the Accomplishment of God's Word, though we know all Things to be in his Power, and whatsoever is good for us in his Purpose: Whereas Patience is so much and so essentially of the Character of a Christian, that no Performance of our Duty, and of his Commands on our part, can be a Security and an Assurance of his Blessing upon us without it; which was very evident to St. Paul, when in the 10th Chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews, at the 36th Verse, he says, *For ye have need of Patience, that after ye have done the Will of God, ye might receive the Promise*; as if God had made no Promise to those who are not patient to expect his Performance. The Truth is, God cannot so well know, that is, we do not so well and clearly manifest, that we have done his Will out of Piety and Devotion to him, as by our Patience to wait his Pleasure when we have done it. There may be Design in the Practice of all external Duties of Christianity for our Advantage in this World: The formal outward Profession of Religion may be, and we see too often is, to get so much Reputation and Interest and Dependance with Men, as may enable us to destroy Religion; our Exercise of Charity may have Pride and Vanity to be recommended and magnified, and even Covetousness in it, that we may get Credit enough to oppress other Men, and upon the Stock of that one publick Virtue, be able to practise twenty secret Wickednesses. But our Patience (I speak of that Christian Patience of waiting God's own Time for the receiving those Blessings we pray for, and is an internal Submission of the Mind to him) can have no Stratagem upon this World, nor do us Credit and Advantage with ill Men, being all that Time subjected to their Insolence, Reproach and Tyranny; and therefore St. James makes it the End and Complement and Crown of all that we do: *Let Patience have her perfect Work, that ye may be perfect and intire, wanting nothing*, James i. 4. Which though Tremellius renders, *Et in nulla re sitis destituti*, as if Patience so supplied all Wants and Defects, that we are not over sensible or grieved with those Wants; yet the Vulgar (and with that Beza concurs) hath it, *Ut sitis integri, in nullo deficientes, that you may be intire, wanting in nothing*; which seems most agreeable with the Original: As if it were impossible we could be defective in any Thing, if we were indued with Patience, which can proceed only from the Conscience of having done our Duty, or the reasonable Confidence that God hath accepted us as if we had; for the bold habitual wicked Man, pretend what he will to Temper and Sobriety, never had, never can have Patience. Though this incomparable sovereign Virtue is of great Use and Comfort to us in the whole Course of our Life, be it never so pleasant and prosperous, without any Interruptions of Nature, by Infirmities, Sicknes or Diseases, or Accidents of Fortune in the casual Interruptions in our very Conversation and Commerce with Men; yet the most signal and glorious Use of it is in our Adversity and Calamity, when the Hand of God is heavy upon us, by the Perfidiousness of Friends, the Treachery of Servants, the Power Injustice and Oppression of those Men with whom we are to live; and in those Afflictions, which deprive us of the Comfort of our Families, the Supply of our Estates, the Joy of our Liberty, and all those Particulars which render Life pleasant to us; and in lieu thereof expose us to Want and Poverty, and to the Insolence and

Con-

Contempt which usually attends that miserable Condition. And truly, in this Case, if we could give our selves no other Argument for Patience, methinks it should be enough that never any Man found Ease, Benefit or Relief by Impatience, but improves and extends and multiplies the Agony and Pain and Misery of whatsoever Calamity he undergoes by it; whereas Patience lessens and softens the Burthen, and by Degrees raises the Constitution and Strength to that pitch, that it is hardly sensible of it. And if we would but deal faithfully with our selves and the World, and report and acknowledge how much we have found our selves the better for our Adversity; how by it we have corrected the Follies and Infirmities of our Nature, improved the Faculties of our Mind and Understanding, mended our selves towards God and Man; we should be so far from needing Patience to bear it, that we should even thirst and long and desire to undergo it: *It is good for me that I have been afflicted* (says the Man after God's own Heart) *that I might learn thy Statutes*, Psal. cxix. 71. He that had been brought up from his Cradle in the Knowledge of God, and lived suitable to that Education, learned more from his Affliction than he had done all his Life before: That presented all his Infirmities to him in a true Mirror; he discerned his Pride and his Passion in their own Colours, which appeared before to him only in the Dress of Majesty and Power. The greater and the higher we are in Place, the more we want this sovereign Remembrancer. Mean and inferior People have their Faults as often objected to them as they commit them, it may be oftner; the Counsels of Friends, the Emulation Envy and Opposition of Equals, the Malice of their Enemies, and the Authority and Prejudice in their Superiors, will often present their Defects to them, and interrupt any Career of their Passion and Vanity; but Princes and Great Men, who can have few Friends, (because Friendship presupposeth some kind of Equality) whose Counsellors are commonly Compliers with their Humours, and Flatterers of their Infirmities, who are seldom checked by want of Success in what they propose to themselves, have little help but their own Observation and Experience to cure their Follies and Defects; and that Observation and Experience is never so pregnant and convincing, as under Adversity, which refreshes the Memory, makes it revolve that which was purposely laid aside that it might never be remembred; reforms and sharpens the Understanding, and faithfully collects all that hath been left undone, or hath been done amiss, and presents it to the Judgment; which, now the Clouds and Fumes and Mists of Pride Ambition and Flattery, that used to transport and intoxicate and mislead it, are dispersed, discerns what Misfortunes attended those Faults, what Ruin that Wickedness, the Gradation and Progress each Error hath made, and how close the Punishment had attended the Transgression: Every Faculty of the Mind does its Office exactly, so that how disturbed and disquieted soever the Body is, without doubt the Mind was never in better Health than under this Examination. Besides, if there were no other Good to be expected from it, than what keeps it Company; if we were not sure by well bearing it to be freed from it, and rewarded for it; the very present Benefit and Advantages it gives us, and gives us title too, renders it most ambitiously to be desired; it entitles us to the Compassion and Pity of all good Men: *To him that is afflicted Pity should be shewed from his Friend*, says Job, vi. 14. Nay, it gives us a title to Salvation itself; *For thou wilt save the afflicted People*, says holy David, Ps. xviii. 27. Yet notwithstanding all these Invitations and Promises, all the Examples of good Men, and the Blessings which have crowned those

Exam-

Examples, all our own Experience of ourselves, that we have really gained more Understanding and more Piety in one Year's Affliction than in the whole Course of our prosperous Fortunes, we are so far from a Habit of Patience, and so weary of our Sufferings, that we are even ready to exchange our Innocence to change our Condition.

There was never an Age, in which Men underwent greater Tryals by Adversity; and I fear scarce an Age in which there was a less Stock of Patience to bear it; never more Tribulation, never less glorying in Tribulation. We are all ready enough to magnify our Sufferings, and our Merit in those Sufferings, to make the World believe we have undergone them out of our Piety to God, and Devotion to his Worship; out of our Allegiance to our Sovereign Lord the King, and because we would not consent to the Violation of that, and the wresting his Rights from him by Violence; out of our tender Affection to our native Country, and because we would not consent that should be subject to the exorbitant lawless Power of ambitious wicked Men; the suffering for either of which Causes (and we would have it believed we suffer jointly for them all) intitles us justly to the Merit of Martyrdom: Yet we are so far from comforting and delighting our selves with the Conscience of having performed our Duty, and from the enjoying that Ease and Quiet which naturally results from Innocence, that we rather murmur and censure and reproach God Almighty, for giving the Trophies we have deserved to those who have oppressed us; and study nothing more, than Stratagems to impose upon that Conscience we are weary of, and to barter away our Innocence, that we may be capable of overtaking those in their prosperous Wickedness, from whom we would be thought to have fled for Conscience sake; and instead of a confident attending and waiting God's Time to vindicate himself and us (for if our Sufferings proceeded from those Grounds and Principles we pretend, it were so much his own Cause that we should be sure of his Vindication) we make Excuses for the little Good we have done, and even renounce it by professing to be sorry for it; and that we may be sure to find no check from our Reason, when we have prevailed with our Conscience, we corrupt and bribe our Understandings with fallacious Argumentations, and argue our selves into a liking of our Stupidity, as if we did nothing but what God required at our Hands; we say, God expects we should help our selves, and by natural means endeavour to remove from us those Afflictions and Calamities which the Power of ill Men have brought upon us; that God doth assist and bless those Endeavours: On the other hand, if we sit still, and without any Industry of our own look for supernatural Deliverance, we presume to put God to a Miracle, which he will work for us, and that he will countenance our lethargick Laziness. Having by this Argumentation brought our selves to an Activity, we must then guide our selves by what is possible, and what is practicable, that is, by such Rules and Mediums as they have set down, with whom our Transactions must be admitted. When we are then in any straits, which before our setting out we would not foresee, we have a Maxim at hand to carry us on, of two Evils the least is to be chosen. If we can prevent this Mischief, which seems to us greater, though we are guilty of another which seems less, all is well; especially if our formal and temporary and dissembled Consent to this or that ill Act, enables us or gives us a probable Hope (which is a Flattery we much delight our selves, and are always furnished with) of undoing or reversing those Mischiefs, which for the present we are not, or think our selves not able to prevent. And having thus speciously reduced the Prac-

tice

tice of Christianity to the Notions of civil Prudence and worldly Policy, we insensibly run into all the Guilt we have hitherto with Damage and Loss avoided, and renounce all the Obligations of Piety and Religion by our odious Apostacy. It is true, God expects we should perform all on our Parts that is lawful to be done for our own behoof; but when we have done that, he will have us rely on him for our Deliverance, how distant soever it seems from us, rather than attempt to deliver our selves by any means not agreeable to his precise Pleasure. Neither can there be so stupid a Reliance upon a Miracle, as that God should suffer us to preserve or redeem our selves by ill and crooked Arts, and contribute his Blessings upon such a Preservation; which would be more miraculous, than what seems to them most wonderful. There cannot be a more mischievous Position, than that we should be always doing, always endeavouring to help our selves. He that hath lost his Way in a dark Night, and all the Marks by which he should guide himself, and know whether he be in the Way or not, cannot do so wisely as to sit still till the Morning; especially if he travel upon such uneven Ground and Precipices, that the least mistake in Footing may prove fatal to him: And it will be the same in our other Journey; if we are benighted in our Understandings, and so no Path to tread in but where Thorns and Bryars and Snakes are in our Way; and where the least Deviation from the right Track will lead us into Labyrinths, from whence we cannot be safely disentangled; it will become us, how bleak and stormy soever the Night is, how grievous and pressing soever our Adversity is, to have Patience till the Light appears, that we may have a full Prospect of our Way, and of all that lies in our Way. If the Malice and Power of Enemies oppress us, and drive us to those Exigents, that there appears to us no Expedient to avoid utter Ruin, but submitting and concurring with their Wickedness; we ought to believe that either God will convert their Hearts, or find some other as extraordinary Way to deliver us; and if he does not, that then our Ruin is necessary, and that he will make it more happy to us than our Deliverance would be. We have no such Liberty left us to chuse one Evil, under Pretence that we avoid a greater by so doing. It may be a good Rule in Matter of Damage and Inconvenience; but that which in itself is simply Evil, must not be consented to under any Extenuation or Excuse; and the Project of doing Good, or redeeming the Ill we have done by such Concessions, is more vain, more unjustifiable. We are so far from any Warrant for those Undertakings, that we have an infallible Text, *That we are not to do Evil that Good may come of it*; we ought not to presume that God will give us Time and Opportunity to do it, and then the Intention of doing well will be no good Excuse for the Ill we have actually committed; neither have we reason to be confident that we shall have the Will to do it, if we have the Opportunity; since every Transgression, so deliberated and resolved on, leaves the Mind vitiated and less inclined to Good; and there is such a Bashfulness naturally attends on Guilt, that we have not afterwards the same Alacrity to do well, and grow ashamed and afraid of that Conversation, without which it will not be possible for us to do that good. It will be said, our not concurring in this particular Act, may ruin us, but not hinder the Act from being done; and therefore, that it is too vain an Affectation of our Ruin to oppose that so fruitlessly: And this Consideration and Objection, I fear, hath prevailed over too many to submit to that which they have long opposed, as not agreeable to their Understandings and Conscience; that they have done their Parts, opposed it as long as they were able; that it shall be done whether

they will or no; and that it is only in their Power to perish with what they would preserve, but not to preserve it by perishing; and therefore, that they may for their own Preservation join in the doing that, or consenting to it, which will be done in spite of any Resistance they can make. This is said in the Business of the Church: It is actually oppress'd; the Government of it actually and remedilessly altered; nothing that I can say or do can preserve it; and that the Question is not, whether I would desire to preserve both Church and Kingdom, but whether, when there can be one, and but one preserved, I will lose that because I cannot keep both. But these Arguments cannot prevail with a Conscience informed and guided aright. If my Religion obliged me to do my Duty no longer then conveniently I might; and that when Wants and Necessities and Dangers pressed upon me, I might recede and yield to what I believe wicked or unlawful; I had no more to do, but to make that Necessity and Danger evident to the World for my Excuse. But no Union and Consent in Wickedness can make my Guilt the less; and if nothing I can do can preserve the Church, it is in my Power to preserve my own Innocence, and to have no hand in its Destruction; and I ought to value that Innocence above all the Conveniences and Benefits my Submission can bring to me. And I must confess, I want Logick to prove to myself, that it may be lawful for me to do that to recover or redeem my Fortune, which was not lawful for me to do to preserve it; or that after I have borne great Afflictions and Calamities, I may conscientiously consent to that, which, if I could have done, I might have prevented all those Calamities. No Man is so insignificant, as that he can be sure his Example can do no hurt. There is naturally such a Submission of the Understanding, as many do in truth think that lawful to be done which they see another do, of whose Judgment and Integrity they have a great Opinion; so that my Example may work upon others to do what no other Temptation or Suffering could induce them to; nay, it may not only encrease the Number of the Guilty, but confirm those, who, out of their Reverence to my Carriage and Constancy, began to repent the Ill they had done; and whosoever is truly repenting, thinks at the same time of repairing. I doubt, many Men in those ill Times have found themselves unhappily engaged in a Partnership of Mischief, before they apprehended they were out of the right Way, by seriously believing what this Man said (whose Learning and Knowledge was confessedly eminent) to be Law, and implicitly concluding what another did (whose Reputation for Honesty and Wisdom was as general) to be just and prudent; and I pray God, the Faults of those misled Men may not be imputed to the other, who have Weight enough of their own, and their very Knowledge and Honesty encrease their Damnation. *If thou faint in the Day of Adversity, thy Strength is small*, says Solomon, Prov. xxiv. 10. *Si desperaveris lassus*, says the vulgar Latin; *if being weary or faint, thou despair, thy Strength is small*: It shews thou hast done well out of design, and in Expectation of prospering by it; and being disappointed, thou even repentest the having done thy Duty: for thy Strength and Courage being grounded only on Policy, it must needs be small; whereas if it had been grounded on Conscience and Piety towards God, thou couldst never despair of his Assistance and Protection. Tremellius renders that Text more severely, *Si remisse te geras, tempore angustiae, angusta erit virtus tua*; *If thou art less vigorous in the Time of Trouble, thy Virtue is not Virtue, but a narrow slight Disposition to Good, never grown into a Habit. In the Day of Prosperity be joyful, but in the Day of Adversity consider.*

says the Preacher. *Tremellius* renders it, *Tempore autem mali utere; Use the Time of Trouble, employ it so that thou may'st be the better for it, and that others may be the better by thy Deportment.* It was observed in the primitive Time, that there were more Men converted to Christianity by the Death of every Martyr, than by all their Sermons and Actions of their Life; and thence it was said, *Sanguis Martyrum est Semen Ecclesiae*: Not only that the Confirmation of their Doctrine with their Blood persuaded many that it was the Truth for which many were so ready to pour out their Blood; but that their Demeanour at their Death, their great Courage and Patience, and Contempt of Tortures and Pain, made many believe that there was a Satisfaction and Pleasure and Joy in those Opinions, which was so much superior and above the Agony and Pain of Death, that a Mind refreshed with the one, preserved the Body from the Sense and Feeling of the other; insomuch, as the Prosecutors themselves, who could not be moved with the Orations and Sermons and Disputations of the Prisoners, were converted by beholding them at the Stake. And we oftentimes see passionate and violent Men, whose Animosities and Revenge no Charity or Christian Precepts could suppress and extinguish, so astonished with the brave and constant Carriage of their Adversaries in their Afflictions, which have been unjustly brought upon them by the other, that their very Reverence to their Sufferings have begot a Remorse in them, and a Reparation of their Wrongs: Nay, we often see ill Men, who have justly fallen under heavy Calamities, behave themselves so well under them, that all Prejudice hath been thereby reconciled toward them. To conclude, would'st thou convert thy Adversary to an Admiration and Value and Affection to thee, to a true Sense of the Wrong he hath done thee, there is no such Way, as by letting him see by thy firm and chearful submitting to Adversity, that thou hast a Peace about thee of which thou canst not be robb'd by him, and of which in all his Power he is not possessed. If his Heart be so hardened, and his Conscience seared, that thou canst this way make no Impression on him toward his Conversion, thou shalt however more perplex and grieve and torment his Mind with Envy of thy Virtue, than he can thine with all his Insolence and Oppression.

Of CONTEMPT of DEATH, and the best providing for it.

MONTPELLIER, 1669.

O Death, how bitter is the Remembrance of thee to a Man that liveth at rest in his Possessions, and to the Man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath Prosperity in all Things; yea, unto him that is yet able to receive Meat: O Death, acceptable is thy Sentence to the Needy, and unto him whose Strength faileth, that is now in the last Age, and is vexed with all Things, and to him that despaireth, and hath lost Patience; was the Reflection of the Son of Sirach, upon the several Affections and Humours and Contingencies in the Life of Man, (xli. 1, 2.) But without doubt, the very prosperous Man, who seems to be most at Ease, and without any visible outward Vexation, is as weary very frequently of Life, for Satiety of all Things naturally produces a Satiety of Life itself, as the most miserable Man, whose Appetite of Life seems even by this Observation

variation to continue as long as his Appetite of Meat; for as long as he is able to receive Meat, the Remembrance of Death is bitter to him. The Philosophers who most undervalued Life and most contemned Death, and thought it worthy a serious Meditation and Recollection, *utrum commodius sit, vel mortem transire ad nos, vel nos ad eam, whether we should stay till Death calls upon us, or we call upon it*; and believed that it was the greatest Obligation that Providence had laid upon Mankind, *Quod unum introitum nobis ad vitam dedit, exitus multos*; and that it was therefore a very foolish thing to complain of Life, when they may determine it when they will: *Hoc est unum, cur quod de vita non possimus queri, neminem tenet*; they may chuse whether they will live or no: And though Men were obliged to make their Lives conformable to the good Examples of other Men, in the Manner of their Death they were only to please themselves, *optima est quæ placet*; yet there was a great difference in this Point between the Philosophers themselves, and many of them held it very unlawful, and a great Wickedness, for any Man to offer Violence to himself, and to deprive himself of his own Life, and *expectandum esse exitum quem natura decrevit*: And surely, excluding all other Considerations, there seems to be more Fortitude and Courage in daring to live miserably, and to undergo those Assaults which that Life is liable to, than in preventing and redeeming himself from it by a sudden voluntary Death; and the other Party, which most disliked and professed against this Restraint, as the Contradiction of that Liberty in which Man was born, as very few of them in their Practice parted voluntarily with their Lives, so in their Discourses they kept the Ballance equal; and as they would not have their Disciples too much in love with Life, to set too high and too great a Value upon it, so they would by no means suffer them to condemn, much less hate it; *Ne nimis amemus vitam, & ne nimis oderimus*: They had so many Cautions and Hesitations and Distinctions about the abandoning of Life, that a Man may see that Death was no pleasant Prospect to them. He who would kill himself ought to do it with Deliberation and Decency, *non fugere debet e vita, sed exire*; and above all, that *libido moriendi* was abominable. It must not be a dislike of Life, but a Satiety in it, that disposed them to part with it. The truth is, though they could have no farther Reflections in this Disquisition, than were suggested to them by a full Consideration of the Law of Nature, and the Obligations thereof, and could not consider it as a thing impious in itself as it related to Heaven and Hell; yet the difference that was in their View was very great between Being and not Being, and their little or no Comprehension what was done after Death, or whether any thing succeeded it or no, that many of them from thence valued Life the more, and some of them the less.

The best Christians need not be ashamed to sharpen, to raise their own Contemplations and Devotions, by their Reflection upon the Discourse of the heathen Philosophers; but they may be ashamed if from those Reflections their Piety be not indeed both instructed and exalted: And if their mere Reason could raise and incite them to so great a Reverence for Virtue, and so solicitous a Pursuit of it, we may well blush if our very Reason so much informed by them, be not at least equal to theirs; and being endued and strengthened with clear Notions of Religion, it doth not carry us higher than they were able to mount, and to a Perfection they were not able to ascend to. We may learn from them to undervalue Life so much, as not affect it above the Innocence of Living, or living innocently: We may so far learn from them

to condemn Death, as not to avoid it with the Guilt or Infamy of Living. But then the Consideration of Heaven and Hell, the Reward and Punishment which will inevitably attend our Living and Dying well or ill, will both raise and fix our Thoughts of Life and Death in another Light than they were accustomed to; neither of those Lands of Promise having been contained in their Map, or in any Degree been exposed to their Prospect; and nothing but the View of those Land-Marks can infuse into us a just Esteem of Life, and a just Apprehension of Death. Christianity then doth neither oblige us not to love Life, or not to fear Death; but to love Life so little, that we may fear Death the less. Nothing can so well prepare us for it, as a continual thinking upon it; and our very Reason methinks, should keep us thinking of that which we know must come, and cannot know when; and therefore the being much surprized with the Approach of it is as well a Discredit to our Reason as to our Religion; and beyond an humble and contented Expectation of it Religion requires not from us: It being impossible for any Man who is bound to pay Money upon demand, not to think of having the Money ready against it is demanded; nor doth any Man resolve to make a Journey, without providing a *Viaticum* for that Journey; and this Preparation will serve our Turn; that *libido moriendi* is no Injunction of Christianity: And we know in the Primitive Times, that as great pains were taken to remove those Fears and Apprehensions out of the Hearts of Christians, which terrified them out of their Religion, by presenting to them the great Reward and Joy and Pleasure which they were sure to be possessed of who died for their Religion; so there was no less to restrain them from being transported with such a Zeal, as made them, out of the Affectation of Martyrdom to call for it, by finding out and reproaching the Judges, and declaring their Faith unasked that they might be put to Death; to be contented to die when they could not honestly avoid it, was the true Martyrdom. We need not seek Death out, it will come in its due Time; and if we then conform decently to its Summons, we have done what is expected from us. There are so many commendable and worthy Ends for which we may desire to live, that we may very lawfully desire that our Death may be deferred. St. Paul himself, who had been so near Heaven that he was not sure that he had not been there, was put to a stand, and corrected his Impatience to be there again, with the Consideration of the Good he might do by living and continuing in this World; *I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better: nevertheless, to abide in the Flesh is more needful for you*, Phil. i. 23, 24. He knew well his own Place there which was reserved for him, but he knew as well that the longer his Journey thither was deferred, he should have the more Company there; and this made his Choice of Life, even upon the Comparison, very warrantable. Men may very piously desire to live, to comply with the very Obligation of Nature in cherishing their Wives and bringing up their Children, and to enjoy the Blessings of both: and that he may contribute to the Peace and Happiness and Prosperity of his Country, he may heartily pray not to die. Length of Days is a particular Blessing God vouchsafes to those he favours most, as giving them thereby both a Task and Opportunity to do the more Good. They who are most weary of Life, and yet are most unwilling to die, are such who have lived to no purpose; who have rather breathed than lived. They who pretend to the Apostle's Extasy, and to desire a Dissolution from a religious Nauseating the Folly and Wickedness of this World, and out of a devout Contemplation of the Joys of Heaven, administer too

much Cause of Doubting, that they seem to triumph over Nature more than they have Cause, and that they had rather live till the next Year than die in this. He who believes the World not worthy of him, may in truth be thought not worthy of the World. If Men are not willing to be deprived of their Fortunes and Preferments and Liberty, which are but the ordinary Perquisites of Life, they may very justifiably be unwilling to be deprived of Life it self, upon which those Conveniencies depend; and Death is accompanied with many Things, which we are not obliged solicitously to covet. We are well prepared for it, when by continual thinking upon it we are so prepared, as not to be in any Degree terrified with the Approach of it, and at the resigning our Life into his Hands who gave it; and a Temper beyond this is rather to be imagined, than attained by any of those Rules of Understanding which accompany a Man that is in good Health of Body and Mind; and the Sickness and Infirmary of either is more like to amaze and corrupt the Judgment, than to elevate and inspire it with any rational transcendent and practical Speculations. The best Counsel is to prepare the Mind by still thinking of it, *Illis gravis est, quibus est repentina, facile eam sustinet qui semper expectat.* No doubt it must exceedingly disorder all their Faculties, who cannot endure the mention of it, and do foolishly believe (for many such Sots there are) that they shall dye the sooner, if they do any of those Things which dying People used to do, and which no Body ought to defer till that Season: And there cannot be a better Expedient to enable Men to pass that Time with Courage and moderate Chearfulness, than so to have dispatched and settled all the Business of the World when a Man is in Health, that he may be vacant when Sickness comes from all other Thoughts but such as are fit to be the Companions of Death, and from all other Business but dying; which, as it puts an End in a Moment to all that is mortal, so it requires the Operation of more than is mortal to make that last Moment agreeable and happy.

Of FRIENDSHIP.

MONTPELLIER, 1670.

Friendship must have some extraordinary Excellence in it, when the great Philosopher as well as best Orator commends it to us to prefer before all Things in the World; *Ut amicitiam omnibus rebus humanis anteponatis*: and it must be very precious, when it was the Circumstance that made David's highest Affliction most intolerable, that his Lover and his Friend was put from him; and there could be no Aggravation of the Misery he endured, when his own familiar Friend, in whom he trusted, was turned against him. This heroical Virtue is pretended to by all, but understood or practised by very few; which needs no other Manifestation, than that the cholerick Person thinks it an Obligation upon his Friend to assist him in a Murder; the unthrifty and licentious Person expects that Friendship should oblige him who pretends to love him, to waste all his Estate in Riots and Excesses, by becoming bound for him, and so liable to pay those Debts which his Pride and Vanity contract. In a word, there is nothing that the most unreasonable Faction or the most unlawful Combination and Conspiracy can be applied to compass, which is not thought by those who should govern the World to be the proper and necessary Office of Friendship; and that the Laws of Friendship

ship are extremely violated and broken, if it doth not engage in the Performance of all those Offices, how unjust and unworthy soever. And thus the sacred Name of Friendship, and all the generous Duties which result from it, are dishonoured and discredited; as if they could be applied to the Propagation of Vice, or to the Support of Actions inconsistent with Discretion and Honesty. The Son of *Sirach* had no such Imagination, when he pronounces, that *a faithful Friend is the Medicine of Life, and they that fear the Lord shall find him*: If he be a Gift that God bestows upon them who fear him, they will not lose both the Gift and the Giver upon vile and unworthy Employments. Let us therefore, lest this precious blessed Composition be driven out of the World, by the Fallhood and Violence of those who pretend to adore it, or withdraws itself from Mankind, because there are so few Breasts prepared to receive and entertain it, in the first place, examine what in truth Friendship is; what are the Obligations of it; and what Persons, by the Excellence or Corruption of their Natures, are capable or incapable of being possessed of it, and receiving the Effects of it. It may be, it is easier to describe, as most Men have done who have writ of it, than to define Friendship; yet I know not why it may not rightly be defined to be, a Union between just and good Men, in their joint Interest and Concernment, and for the Advancement thereof: for it hath always been consented to, that there can be no Friendship but between good Men, because Friendship can never be severed from Justice; and consequently, can never be applied to corrupt Ends. It is the first Law of Friendship, if we believe *Tully*, who saw as far into it as any Man since, *Ut neque rogemus res turpes, nec faciamus rogati*; which puts an End to all their Endeavours, who would draw any corrupted Liquor from so pure a Fountain. Friendship neither requires nor consents to any thing that is not pure and sincere; they who introduce the least Spot or crooked Line into the Draught and Portraiture of Friendship, destroy all its Beauty, and render it so deformed, that it cannot be known. Let us then examine, from the Integrity of this Definition and Institution, what the Obligations of it are, and what Friends are bound under that Seal to do or suffer for one another.

1. The first and principal Obligation is, to assist each other with their Counsel and Advice; and because the greatest Cement that holds and keeps them together, is the Opinion they have of each other's Virtue, they are to watch as carefully as is possible that neither of them swerve from the strict Rules thereof; and if the least Propensity towards it be discovered, to apply Admonition and Counsel and Reprehension to prevent a Lapse. He who sees his Friend do amiss, commit a Trespass upon his Honour or upon his Conscience, do that which he were better not do, or do that which he ought not to do, and doth not tell him of it, do all he can to reform him, hath broken the Laws of Friendship; since there is no one Obligation to be named with it; so that it may be said to be so much the sole Use of Friendship, that where that fails, the Performance of all other Offices is to no Purpose; and it may be observed, that few Men have ever fallen into any signal Misfortune, at least not been lost in it, who have ever been possessed of a true Friend, except it be in a Time when Virtue is a Crime. Counsel and Reprehension was a Duty of the Text in the *Levitical* Law; *Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him*, (Lev. xix, 17.) and Mr. *Selden* tells us of a *Rabbi*, that thought it one of the principal Causes of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, because they had left off reproving one

one another, *Non excisa fuisset Jerosolima, nisi quoniam alter alterum non coarguebat*; and there is no doubt, the not exercising this essential Part of Friendship with that Sincerity and Plainness it ought to be, hath been and is the occasion of infinite Mischief, and hath upon the Matter annihilated Friendship, and brought it under the Reproach of being a Pandar, and prostituted to all the vile Offices of Compliance with the Infirmities and Vices of the Person it regards. It is thought to be a necessary Office of Friendship, to conceal the Faults, of a Friend, and make them be thought much less than they are; and it is so; every Man ought to be very tender of the Reputation of one he loves, and to labour that he may be well thought of; that is his Duty with reference to other: but he is neither to lessen or conceal it to himself, who can best provide for his Reputation, by giving no Cause for Aspersions; and he, who in such Cases gives not good Counsel to his Friend, betrays him.

2. The second Office of Friendship is, to assist the Interest and Pretence of his Friend with the utmost Power he hath, and with more Sollicitude than if it were his own, as in truth it is; but then *Tully's Rule* is excellent, *Tantum cuique tribuendum est, primum quantum ipse efficere possit, deinde quantum quem diligas atque adjuves possit sustinere*; Men are not willing to have any Limits put to their Desires, but think their Friends bound to help them to any thing they think themselves fit for. But Friendship justly considers what in truth they are, not what they think themselves fit for; *quantum possunt sustinere*: Friendship may be deceived, and overvalue the Strength and Capacity of his Friend, think that he can sustain more than indeed his Parts are equal to; but Friendship is not so blind, as not to discern a total Unfitness, an absolute Incapacity, and can never be engaged to promote such a Subject. It can never prefer a Man to be a Judge, who knows nothing of the Law; nor to be a General, who was never a Soldier. Promotions, in which the Publick are concerned, must not be assigned by the Excess of private Affections; which, though possibly they may chuse the less fit, must never be so seduced as not to be sure there is a competent Fitness in the Person they make Choice of: otherwise Friendship, that is compounded of Justice, would be unjust to the Publick, out of private Kindness towards particular Persons; which is the highest Injustice imaginable, of which Friendship is not capable.

3. The third Duty of Friendship is entire Confidence and Communication, without which faithful Counsel the just Tribute of Friendship can never be given; and therefore Reservation in Friendship is like Concealment in Confession, which makes the Absolution void, as the other doth the Counsel of no effect. *Seneca's Advice* is excellent, *Diu cogita an tibi in amicitiam aliqui recipiendus sit*: It is want of this Deliberation, this long thinking whether such a Man be capable of Friendship, and whether thou thyself art fit for it, that brings so much Scandal upon it, makes Friendships of a Day, or rather miscalls every short Acquaintance, any light Conversation, by the Title of Friendship; of which very many of those are incapable, who are fit enough for Acquaintance, and commendable enough in Conversation. When thou hast considered this well, which thou canst not do without considering it long; *cum placuerit fieri*, if thou resolvest that he is fit for thy Friendship, *toto illum pectore admitte*, receive him into thy Bosom; let him be possessed of all thy Purposes, all thy Thoughts; to conceal any thing from him now is an Affront, and a disavowing him for thy Friend. It is the reason the *Roman Church* gives, why they define the Reservation and Concealment of any Sin, or Circumstance of it, in

Con-

Confession of it to be Sacrilege, because it defrauds God of somewhat that was due to him from the Penitent; and by the same Reason, the not entirely communicating all thou knowest and all thou thinkest is a Lay-Sacrilege, a retaining somewhat that is his due by the Dedication of Friendship; and without this sincere Communication, the principal Use of Friendship is abated and with-held, and the true Virtue thereof undiscovered, and the Comfort that attends it.

The fourth Obligation in Friendship is Constancy, and continuing firm to the Laws and Obligations of it. Friendship is so much more a Sacrament than Marriage is, that in many Cases a Friend is more to be trusted and relied upon than the Wife of his Bosom; and so is not to be cast off or dismiss'd, but upon the most discovered and notorious Transgressions; and even then there will remain some Marks, yea and Obligations, which can never be razed out or cancelled. *Scipio* had never Patience so much as to hear that Proposition of *Bias* the Philosopher pronounced, *Ita amare oportere ut aliquando esset osurus*, that a Man was to love his Friend in such a manner, that he might hate him likewise if there were an Occasion; which indeed was a barbarous Advice of a rude *Stoick*, whose Profession was not to appear like other Men. It is possible that a Friend may fall so far from the Laws of Virtue and Justice, and commit such Crimes and Offences, that, like violating the Integrity of the Marriage-Bed, may cause a Separation even to the Dissolution of Friendship; but it is not possible for a Friend to think he will do so 'till he hath done it notoriously: and even after that Time, though the Communication which constituted the Friendship be interrupted, there remains still some Inclination; and he thinks it just to pay such a Penalty for the Error and Unskillfulness of his Election, that he hath still Kindness and Pity, and is never heard to load his divorced Friend with Reproaches and severe Censures; it is Grief enough not to speak of it at all, but he can never be provoked to speak bitterly of him; the grateful Memory of the past Intercourse, and of some Virtue that was in the Object, will preserve him from that Indecency. There cannot be a greater Manifestation how falsely or weakly the common Friendships of the Age are founded and entred into, than by every Day's Observation of Men, who profess Friendship this Day to those against whom they declare To-morrow the most mortal and implacable Hatred and Malice; and blush not the next Day to depress the same Man with all the imaginable Marks of Infamy, whom the Day before they extolled with all the Commendations and Praises which Humanity is capable of: Whereas, in truth, natural Modesty should restrain Men, who have been given to speak too well of some Men, from speaking at all ill of the same Persons, that their former Excess may be thought to proceed from their abundant Charity, not from the Defect of their Judgment. *Solomon* thought Friendship so sacred a Tye, that nothing but the Discovery of Secrets, which is Adultery in Marriage, could separate from it; and surely a greater Violation of Friendship cannot be than such a Discovery, and scarce any other Guilt towards the Person of a Friend can be equal to it. But Friendship may be broken and dissolved by Faults committed against other Persons, though of no immediate relation to the Friend himself. When Men cease to be of the same Virtue they were, or profess'd and seem'd to be of, when that Conjunction was entred into; if they cease to be just and pious, and fall into the Practice of some notorious and scandalous Vice; Friendship is of so delicate a Temper, that she thinks her own Beauty impaired by those Spots, and herself abandoned by that foul Practice. If the avowing a Friendship for

a corrupt and wicked Person be so scandalous, that the best Men cannot bear the Reproach of it, such a Departure from Probity and a good Name will excuse and justify the others withdrawing from that virtuous Relation, so much already abandoned by the Impiety of the Transgressor; yet there will remain such a Compassion towards the Person, which is very consistent with the Detestation of the Vice, that he shall receive all the Offices of Charity, Kindness and Generosity, which cannot but still spring from some Root or Branch of the withered and decayed former Friendship, that can never be totally extinguished, though the Lustre be faded and the Vigour lost.

Since then the Temper and Composition of Friendship itself is so delicate and spiritual, that it admits no meer carnal Ingredients, and the Obligations of it are so inseparable and indispensible, we cannot but discern how many Classes of Men are utterly incapable of being admitted into that Relation; or rather, how very few are worthy to be received into the Retinue of Friendship, which all the World lays a claim to. The proud Man can very hardly act any part in Friendship, since he reckons none to be his Friends but those who admire him; and thinks very few wise enough to administer Advice and Counsel to him, nor will admit any Man to have the Authority of Reprehension, without which Friendship cannot subsist. The cholerick angry impatient Man can be very little delighted with it, since he abhors nothing so much as Contradiction; and Friendship exercises no Liberty more than that of contradicting, finding Fault with any thing that is amiss, and is as obstinate in controuling as the most stubborn Nature can be in transgressing. The licentious and lustful Person is so transported with those Passions which he calls Love, that he abhors nothing so much as the Name of Friendship; which he knows would be always throwing Water upon that Fire which he wishes should still inflame him, and endeavouring to extinguish all those Appetites, the satisfying whereof gives him all the Pleasure he enjoys in Life. And lastly, to the covetous unjust and ambitious Person, nothing can be so uneasy, so grievous, and so odious as Friendship; which affronts all their Desires and Pursuits with rude Discourses of the Wealth of Contentedness, of the Fame of Integrity, and of the State and Glory of Humility, and would persuade them to make themselves happy, by renouncing all those Things which they care for. There being then such an Incongruity and Unaptness in these several Classes of Men, which comprehend so large a Part of Mankind, to receive and give Entertainment to this transcendent Virtue, which is the Ornament of Life, that Friendship seems to be reserved only for those, who, by being already Persons of that rare Perfection and Rectitude, can receive least Benefit by it, and so is an impertinent Cordial prepared only for their Use who enjoy excellent Health, and is not to be applied to the weak, sick or indisposed, for their Recovery or Preservation; there is no doubt there must be at least a Disposition to Virtue in all who would entertain, or be entertained in Friendship: The several Vices mentioned before, exalted into Habits, have more Poison in them, than the Antidote of Friendship can expel or delights to contend with; there must be some Declension of their Vigour, before they will permit the Patient the Leisure to walk in the gentle and temperate Air of any sober and serious Conversation. But as there is no such Perfection in Nature, nor any such Accomplishment of Manners, no such Quality and Degree of Life to which Friendship is not exceedingly useful, and which doth not receive infinite Benefit and Advantage by it and from it; (and therefore if Kings and

and Princes are incapable of it, by the sublime Inequality of their Persons with Men of a lower Rank, for Friendship does suppose some kind of Equality, it is such an Allay to their transcendent Happiness, that they shall do well, by Art and Condescension, to make themselves fit for that which Nature hath not made them;) so it may by Degrees and faint Approaches be entertained by, and have Operation upon, even those depraved Affections and Tempers, which seem most averse from and incapable of the Effects and Offices of it.

Friendship is compounded of all those soft Ingredients which can insinuate themselves and slide insensibly into the Nature and Temper of Men of the most different Constitutions, as well as of those strong and active Spirits which can make their way into perverse and obstinate Dispositions; and because Discretion is always predominant in it, it works and prevails least upon Fools. Wicked Men are often reformed by it, weak Men seldom. It doth not fly in the Face of the proud Man, nor endeavour to jostle him out of his Way with unseasonable Reprehensions; but watches fit Occasions to present his own Vices and Infirmities in the Persons of other Men, and makes them appear ridiculous, that he may fall out with them in himself. It provokes not the angry Man by peremptory Contradictions; he understands the Nature of the Passion, as well as of the Person, too well, to endeavour to suppress or divert it with Discourses when it is in Fury, but even complies and provokes it that he may extinguish it; *Simulabit iram, ut tanquam adjutor & doloris comes, plus autoritatis in consiliis habeat*; a Friend will pretend to have a greater Sense of the Indignity, that he may be of Counsel in the Revenge, and so will defer it till it be too late to execute it, and till the Passion is burned out with its own Fire. Friendship will not assault the lustful Person with the Commendation of Chastity; and will rather discourse of the Diseases and Contempt that will accompany him, than of the Damnation that will attend him; it applies Caution and Lenitives to Vice that is in Rage and flagrant, the Fever of which must be in Remission before the sovereign Remedies of Conscience are to be administered. There is a Weakness that contributes to Health; and Counsel must be as warily increased as Diet, whilst there are Dregs enough left of the Disease to spoil the Operation and Digestion. Friendship hath the Skill and Observation of the best Physician, the Diligence and Vigilance of the best Nurse, and the Tenderness and Patience of the best Mother. Lastly, It will not endeavour to reform those who are covetous, unjust or ambitious, by perswading them that Poverty is to be preferred before Plenty; that it is better to be oppressed than to oppress; and that Contempt is more to be affected than Honour. Friendship is neither obliged, nor obliges it self, to such Problems; but leaves it to those who satisfy themselves in speaking what they think true, without caring whether it does good or whether any Body believes them or no. Friendship may lose its Labour, but it is very solicitous that it may not; and therefore applies such Counsels as it may reasonably presume will not be cast up, though it may not carry away all the Humour it is applied to. It will tell the covetous Man, that he may grow very rich, and yet spend Part of his Wealth as he gathers it, generously upon himself, and charitably upon others; it will put him in mind of Solomon's Observation, that, *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to Poverty*, Prov. xi. 24. And how far the Apprehension of that which he most endeavours to avoid may work upon him, depends much upon the Force and Power of Friendship; and it hath wrought a great Cure, if it hath prevailed with him

to

to make his Money his Servant, and to do the Business of a Servant, instead of being a Slave to his Money. It is not to be expected, that all the Precepts and all the Example of the strongest Friendship shall have Force enough to drive away all the Malignity which possesses these several distemper'd Persons; it will be very much, and a sufficient Evidence of the divine Influence of Friendship, if it prevails with the proud Man to be less proud, and to endure to be in that Company that doth not flatter him; if it makes the angry Man so much ashamed, as to blush for his impertinent Rage, and though he cannot suppress it, yet to excuse it; if it brings the lustful Person to abhor unclean Discourses, to live *cautè* if not *castè*, and to endeavour to conceal his Sin, though it cannot suppress it; and if it can persuade the covetous Man to be less sordid towards himself, though not less avaritious towards others, it hath done great Offices, and sown Seed that may grow up to the Destruction of many of the Weeds which are left. And it hath been often seen, that many of these Vices have been wonderfully blasted, and even withered away, by the discreet Castigation of a Friend; and rarely known that they have continued long in their full Rage and Vigour, when they have been set upon or undermined by skillful Friendship.

But I cannot here avoid being told, That here is an excellent Cordial provided for People in the Plague, to whom no Body hath the Charity to administer it; that since Friendship can only be between good Men, the several ill Qualities which possess those Persons have made them incapable of it, and so cannot receive those Offices from it; if the proud and the angry, the lustful, revengeful and ambitious Person, be not capable of Friendship, they can never receive Benefit by it. It is very true, there cannot be a perfect entire Friendship with Men of those depraved Affections, who cannot perform the Functions of it; there cannot be that Confidence, Communication and mutual Concernment between such Persons, and those who are endued with that Virtue and Justice which is the Foundation of Friendship: but Men may receive the Benefit and Offices of Friendship who are neither worthy nor capable of entering into the Society and Obligation of it, or to return those Offices they receive. It hath so much Justice in it, that it is solicitous to relieve any Body that is oppressed, though it hath proceeded from his own Default; and it hath so much Charity in it, that it is ready to give to whoever wants, though it could chuse a better Object. It is possible that a fast Friendship with a worthy Father may in such a Degree descend to an unworthy Son, that it may extend it self in all the Offices towards him which Friendship uses to produce; though he can make no proportionable Return, nor it may be cares not for that Exercise of it. It is not impossible but that we may have contracted Friendship with Men who then concealed their secret Vices, which would, if discovered, have obstructed the Contract; or they may afterwards fall into those Vices, which cannot but dissolve it, interrupt that Communication and Confidence which is the Soul of it: Yet in neither of those Cases, we must not retire to such a Distance, as not to have the former Obligation in our View; we must so far separate as to appear at the farthest Distance from their Corruptions, but we must retain still a tender Compassion for their Persons, and still administer to them all the Comfort and all the Counsel that may restore them again to an entire Capacity of our Friendship; and if that cannot be, to prosecute them still with some Effects of it, inflict upon our selves, for our own Over-sight and want of Prudence, more Patience and more Application than we are bound to use towards

towards Strangers; in a Word, Friendship is so diffusive, that it will infuse its Effects to the Benefit of any who are in any degree capable of receiving Benefit from it.

Of COUNSEL and CONVERSATION.

MONTPELLIER, 1670.

Counsel and Conversation is a second Education, that improves all the Virtue and corrects all the Vice of the former, and of Nature itself; and whosoever hath the Blessing to attain this Benefit, and understands the Advantage of it, will be superior to all the Difficulties of this Life, and cannot miss his Way to the next. Which is the more easy to be believed, by the contrary Prospect, by the Evidence of the infinite Mischief which the corrupt and evil Conversation the Company of wicked Men produces in the World, to the making Impressions upon those who are not naturally ill inclined, but by degrees wrought upon, first to laugh at Chastity Religion and Virtue and all virtuous Men, and then to hate and condemn them; so that it is a Miracle of some Magnitude, for any Man to have much Conversation with such People, to be often in that Company, and afterwards heartily to forsake them; and he ought to look upon himself as a Brand pulled and snatched out of the Fire by the omnipotent Arm of God himself. I know not how it comes to pass, but notorious it is, that Men of depraved Principles and Practice are much more active and solicitous to make Profelites, and to corrupt others, than pious and wise Men are to reduce and convert; as if the Devil's Talent were more operative and productive, than that which God intrusts in the Hands of his Children, which seems to be wrapped up in a Napkin without being employed; *Frowardness is in his Heart, he deviseth Mischief continually, he soweth Discord*, says Solomon of his wicked Man, (*Prov. x. 14.*) *Pravo corde architectatur malum*, as one Translation renders it; He doth not do Mischief by chance, or negligently, but deliberates how he may do it with more Success; he builds it commodiously and speciously to the Eye, that it may invite Men to inhabit it; there is no Industry nor Art wanting to make it prosper, and to yield a good Harvest: Whereas good Men are content to enjoy the Peace and Tranquility of their own Consciences; are very strict in all they say or do; and are severe Examiners of their own Actions, that they may be correspondent to their Professions, and take themselves to be without any Obligation to be inquisitive into the Actions of other Men. Which, though it be a good Temper to restrain that unlawful Curiosity and Censoriousness, which would dispose us to be remiss towards our selves, and severe Censurers of the Actions of other Men, is far from the communicative Duty which we owe to our Brethren in an open and friendly Conversation. *When thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren*, was an Injunction of our Saviour himself to St. Peter, (*Luke xxii. 28.*) God bestows Conversion and any other Perfections upon us, that we may convert and mend other Men: Charity is diffusive, and cares not what it spends, so it enriches others. There are two very erroneous Opinions, which hinder and obstruct those Offices which should flow from the Perfections of all Men towards others: The first, that it is the Office of the Ministers and Preachers to teach all Men their Duty to God, and to instruct them in the Ways of a virtuous and in-

nocent Conversation; the second, that Men are generally little the better for Advice, and care not to receive it, except from Persons who have some Authority over them. For the first, the Preachers need all the Help other Men can give them towards the reforming of Mens Manners, without which they will be able to contribute but very little to their Faith; and the chief Reason that their Faith is not better, is, because their Manners are so bad, which the Preachers can very hardly be informed of, nor easily take Notice of when they are informed: The second proceeds from too ill an Opinion of Mankind, which is much more tractable than it is thought to be, and hath an inward Reverence for that Virtue it doth not practise; and there is too much Reason to believe, that Vice flourishes more by the Negligence of those who are Enemies to it, than the Cherishing it receives by those who practise it; and if the others laboured so much as they ought to do to prevent the Growth of it, to nip it in the Bud before it be grown impudent, and plucking it up by the Roots when it is grown so, by severe and sharp Reprehension, the Vigour of it would quickly decay; and nothing is so frequent as Cures of this kind by honest Conversation, which insinuates itself into the Minds of Men insensibly, and by degrees gets Authority, and even a Jurisdiction, over the Hearts of the worst Men: The hearing the ordinary Discourses of sober and discreet Men, the very being where they are, and looking upon them, works great Effects; *est aliquid, quod ex magno viro, vel tacente proficias*; the very Aspect of a venerable Person, tho' he says nothing, leaves an Impression upon the Mind of any Man who is not utterly abandoned to Vice; and Men of loose Principles find another kind of Spirit of Mirth, and it may be another kind of Sharpness of Wit, in innocent and virtuous Conversation, that may have some Condescension to make itself delighted in, and thereupon care less for the Company they have kept, and more for that they are fallen into. And it is a wonderful degree of Recovery; when Men have these Recollections, they will quickly attain to the rest; he that hath redeemed himself out of ill Company, or from taking delight in it, is far advanced towards a perfect Reformation. It was a very important Circumspection that *Epicurus* prescribed to his Disciple to be more careful, *cum quibus edas aut bibis, quam quid edas aut bibis*; no Diet can be so mischievous as the Company in which it is taken. And if the first Corruption be not sucked in from the domestick Manners, a little Providence might secure Men in their first Entrance into the World; at least, if Parents took as much care to provide for their Childrens Conversation, as they do for their Cloaths, and to procure a good Friend for them as a good Taylor.

It is not looked upon as the Business of Conversation to mend each other, the Fairness of it rather consists in not offending; the propagating Part is not enough understood; if it were, Men would take more Joy, and feel a greater inward Content, in making Men good and pious and wise, than in any other kind of Generation: which are but the vulgar Acts of Nature; but the mending and exalting the Soul is so near a new Act of Creation, that it illustrates it; and this Illustration God expects from those whom he hath qualified for it, by giving them Parts above other Men, virtuous and good Dispositions, and if he adds Eminency of Place too, which draws the Eyes of Men more upon them, and inclines them to submit to their Advice and Directions. And it is no Discharge of their Duty to be innocent and entire themselves, if they do not make others so by their Conversation as well as their Example: They are very good Magistrates, (and a Commonwealth prospers much the better for having such) who are
very

very strict and severe against Offenders, and retain Men within their Duties, by punishing those who transgress; but they are much better Magistrates, who by their Communication and Instruction, and any other Condescension, can lessen the Number of Delinquents; which, without doubt is in every good Man's Power to do, according to their several degrees, if they made it their Business, and better Business they cannot have, to inform their Friends and their Neighbours before they commit Faults, and reclaim them after they have committed them by Animadversions and Reprehensions. The Malignity of Man's Nature is not so violent and impetuous, as to hurry them at first, and at once, into any supreme and incorrigible Love of Wickedness: Poor People begin first to be idle, which brings Want upon them, before they arrive at the Impudence of Stealing; and if they were at first brought to be in Love with Industry, which is as easily learned, and it may be in itself as easy as Idleness, the other Mischief would be never thought of. The first Ingredients into the most enormous Crimes, are Ignorance, Incogitance, or some sudden violent Passion; which a little Care in a charitable Neighbour might easily inform and reform, before it grows up into Rebellion, or Contempt of Religion. Every Man ought to be a Physician to him, for whose Malady he hath a certain Cure; and there is scarce a more infallible Cure than Counsel and Conversation: which hath often recovered the most profligate Persons; and hath so seldom failed, that an enormous Man of dissolute and debauch'd Manners hath been rarely known, who hath lived in frequent Conversation with Men of Wisdom and unblameable Lives. But it will be said, that such People will never like or endure that Conversation. It may be, like ill Physicians we may too soon despair of the Recovery of some Patients, and therefore leave them to desperate Experiments: We are too apt to look so superciliously upon the natural Levities and Excesses of Youth, as if they were not worth the Pains of Conversion; or that it would be best wrought by Necessities, Contempt or Prisons: either of which are very ill Schools to reduce them to Virtue. Such Men will never decline the Conversation of their Superiors if they may be admitted to it, though it may be they intend to laugh at it; but by this, in an instant, they depart from the Pleasure of obscene and prophane Discourses, and insensibly find an Alteration in their Nature, their Humour and their Manners; there being a sovereign and a subtle Spirit in the Conversation of good and wise Men, that insinuates itself into corrupt Men, that tho' they know not how it comes about, they sensibly feel an Amendment; *Non deprehendent quemadmodum aut quando, profuisse deprehendent*; they cannot tell how or when, but they are sure they are restored. It is great pity that so infallible a Medicine should be locked up by Prejudice or Morosity.

Of PROMISES.

MONTPELLIER, 1670.

PROMISES was the ready Money that was first coined, and made current by the Law of Nature, to support that Society and Commerce that was necessary for the Comfort and Security of Mankind; and they who have adulterated this pure and legitimate Metal with an Allay of Distinctions and subtle Evasions, have introduced a counterfeit and pernicious Coin, that destroys all the Simplicity and Integrity of human Conversation. For what Obligations can ever be the Earnest of Faith and Truth, if Promises may be violated? The Superinduction of others for the Corroboration and Maintenance of Government had been much less necessary, if Promises had still preserved their primitive Vigour and Reputation; nor can any thing be said for the Non-performance of a Promise, which may not as reasonably be applied to the not Observation of an Oath; and in truth, Men have not been observed to be much restrained by their Oaths, who have not been punctual in their Promises, the same Sincerity of Nature being requisite to both. The Philosopher went farther than his Profession obliged him, or in truth than it admitted, when he would not have the Performance exacted, unless *omnia essent eadem, quæ fuerint cum promittentes*; and the Distinction was necessary, when he thought it fit to avoid a Promise he had made to a Man that appears to be an ill Man, who seemed a very good and worthy Person when he made this Promise: and a greater Change could not be; yet he seemed not over-pleased with his own Distinction, and would rather comply with his Promise, if it could be done without much Inconvenience. But too many Christian Casuists have gone much farther in finding out many Inventions and Devices to evade and elude the Faith of Promise, if there hath been Force or Fraud, or any other Circumvention, in the contriving the Promise and Engagement; which must dissolve all the Contracts and Bargains which are commonly made among Men, who still contend to be too hard for one another, that they may advance or lessen their Commodity. And no doubt the forming and countenancing those Dispensations hath introduced much Improbability and Tergiversation into the Nature and Minds of Men, which they were not acquainted with whilst they had a due Consideration of the Sacredness of their Word and Promise. It is from the Impiety of this Doctrine, that we run with that Precipitation into Promises and Oaths, and think it lawful to promise that which we know to be unlawful to perform. What is this but to proclaim Perjury to be lawful, at the committing whereof every Christian Heart ought to tremble; or rather to declare that there is no such Sin, no such Thing as Perjury? There is no question, no Man ought to perform an unlawful much less a wicked Oath or Promise; but the Wickedness of executing it doth not absolve any Man from the Guilt and Wickedness of swearing that he would do it; he is perjured in not performing that, which he would be more perjured in performing; and Men who unwarily involve themselves in those Labyrinths, cannot find the way out of them with Innocence, and seldom chuse to do it with that which is next to it, hearty Repentance; but devise new Expedients, which usually increases their Crime and their Perplexity. Where nothing of the Law of God or some manifest Deduction from thence doth controul our Promises, it is great Pity that the mere human Law and Policy of Government should absolve Men from the

the Performance; and a good Conscience will compel him to do that whom the Law will not compel, but suffer to evade for his own Benefit. We have not that Probity which Nature stated us in, if we do not *castigare promittendi temeritatem*, redeem the Rashness and Incogitance of our Promise, by submitting to the Inconvenience and Damage of Performance.

It is one of the greatest Arguments which makes *Machiavel* seem to prefer the Government of a Commonwealth before that of Monarchy, (for he doth but seem to do it, how great a Republican soever he is thought to be,) because he says Kings and Princes are less direct in the Observation of their Promises and Contracts than Republicks are; and that a little Benefit and Advantage disposes them to violate them, when no Profit that can accrue prevails upon the other to recede from the Obligation: Which would be indeed an Argument of Weight and Importance, if it were true. Nor does the Instance he gives in any Degree prove his Assertion; for it was not the Justice of the Senate of *Athens* that refused the Proposition made by *Themistocles*, for the Destruction of the whole Fleet of the rest of *Greece*, to whom it was never made, but the particular Exactness of *Aristides*, to whom it was discovered by Order of the Senate, that he might consider; and he reported, that the Proposition was indeed very profitable, but most dishonest, upon which the Senate rejected it, without knowing more of it; which if they had done, it is probable by their other Practices that they might not so readily have declined it. Nor is the Instance he gives of *Philip* of *Macedon*, other than a general Averment, without stating the Case: As his adored Republick of *Rome* never out-lived that infamous Judgment, that, when a Difference between two of their Neighbours was by a joint Consent referred to their Arbitrement, to whom a Piece of Land in Difference and Dispute between them should belong, determined that it should belong to neither of them, but that they the Republick of *Rome* should enjoy it themselves, because it lay very convenient for them; so that Form of Government hath never since raised any Monuments of their Truth and Justice, in the Observation of the Promises and Contracts which they have made. But though his Comparison and Preference had no good Foundation, he had too much reason to observe, in the Time in which he lived, how little Account Princes made of their Word and Promises, by the several and contradictory Investitures which in a short Time had been given of the Kingdom of *Naples*, which overflowed all *Italy* with a Deluge of Blood, by the Inconstancy and Tergiversation of *Ferdinand* of *Arragon*, who swallowed up all the other Investitures; and afterwards, by the insatiable Ambition and Animosity between *Charles* the Fifth and *Francis* the First, when Treaties and Leagues were entred into, that they might take Breath when they were weary, and with no other Purpose than to watch an Opportunity to break it to their Advantage. This indeed was too great a Prostitution of the Dignity and Faith of Kings to the Censure and Reproach of their Subjects, who found themselves every Day under Sentences and Judgments for the Breach of their Words and Contracts, which they had not entred into with half that Solemnity, and that they must be bound to waste their Estates, and lose or venture their Lives in the Maintenance and Defence of their Prince's wilful and affected Violation of their Word Promise and Oath, to satisfy their Pride or their Humour: And it may be, that easy Inclination to Faithlessness, in which God Almighty was made a Party and a Property in all their Contracts, hath been a principal Motive and Cause of his heavy Judgments upon those Royal Families; of which One, after a numerous Issue, which might naturally have lasted to

the End of the World, hath been long since so fully extinguished, that the Name of *Valois* is lost in any lawful Line; and the Other is so near expired, that it hath not Strength left to draw much Fear from their Neighbours or Reverence from their Subjects, as if they looked upon it as worn out and forsaking the World. How observable soever the Fate of those very great Princes hath been, yet their Successors have taken little Notice of it; and though their Virtues (for they had both transcendent Princely Qualities) have languished in the Imitation, their Vices have been propagated with great Vigour: And Christianity hath not a fitter Scene for Lamentation, than the Consideration how little Account Kings and Princes still make of the Faith they give to each other, and upon how little or no Provocation they break it, upon the least Temptation of their Inconveniency, or only because they are able to do it without Controul or Opposition: So that it is looked upon as no Crime in a King, which is Infamy in a Gentleman; as if because there is no Tribunal before which they can be accused, they cannot therefore be guilty of Perjury. But they should wisely remember and foresee, that there is a High Court of Justice before which they must inevitably appear, where the Perjury of Princes will be so much more severely punished than that of private Men, by how much it is always attended with a Train of Blood, and Rapine, and other ill Consequences, which the other is not guilty of.

Of LIBERTY.

MONTPELLIER, 1670.

Liberty is the Charm, which mutinous and seditious Persons use, to pervert and corrupt the Affections of weak and wilful People, and to lead them into Rebellion against their Princes and lawful Superiors: *En illa, quam saepe optastis, libertas*, said *Catiline*, when he would draw the poor People into a Conspiracy against the Commonwealth. And in that Transportation, Men are commonly so weak and wilful, that they insensibly submit to Conditions of more Restraint and Compulsion, and in truth to more and heavier Penalties for the Vindication of their Liberty, than they were ever liable to in the highest Violation of their Liberty of which they complain, by how much the Articles of War are more severe and hard to be observed, than the strictest Injunctions under any peaceable Government. However, no Age hath been without dismal and bloody Examples of this Fury, when the very Sound of Liberty (which may well be call'd a Charm) hath hurried those who would sacrifice to it, to do and to suffer all the Acts of Tyranny imaginable, and to make themselves Slaves that they may be free. There is no one thing that the Mind of Man may lawfully desire and take delight in, that is less understood and more fatally mistaken than the Word *Liberty*; which, though no Man is so mad as to say it consists in being absolved from all Obligations of Law, which would give every Man liberty to destroy him, yet they do in truth think it to be nothing else than not to be subject to those Laws which restrain them from doing somewhat they have a mind to do; so that whoever is carried away upon that seditious Invitation, hath set his Heart upon some Liberty that he affects, a Liberty for Revenge, a Liberty for Rapine, or the like: which, if owned and avowed, would seduce very few; but being concealed, every Man gratifies himself with such an Image of Liberty as he

worships, and so concur together to overthrow that Government that is inconvenient to them all, though disliked by very few in one and the same respect; and therefore the Strength of Rebellion consists in the private Goss which every Man makes to himself upon the declared Argument of it, not upon the Reasons published and avowed, how specious and popular soever; and thence it comes to pass, that most rebellions expire in a general Detestation of the first Promoters of them, by those who kept them Company in the Prosecution, and discover their Ends to be very different from their Profession.

True and precious Liberty, that is only to be valued, is nothing else but that we may not be compelled to do any thing that the Law hath left in our Choice whether we will do or no; nor hindered from doing any thing we have a mind to do, and which the Law hath given us liberty to do, if we have a mind to it: and Compulsion and Force in either of these Cases, is an Act of Violence and Injustice against our Right, and ought to be repelled by the Sovereign Power, and may be resisted so far by our selves as the Law permits. The Law is the Standard, and the Guardian of our Liberty; it circumscribes and defends it: But to imagine Liberty without a Law, is to imagine every Man with his Sword in his Hand, to destroy him who is weaker than himself; and that would be no pleasant Prospect to those who cry out most for Liberty. Those Men, of how great Name and Authority soever, who first introduced that Opinion, that Nature produced us in a State of War; and that Order and Government was the Effect of Experience and Contract, by which Man surrendered the Right he had by Nature, to avoid that Violence which every Man might exercise upon another; have been the Authors of much Mischief in the World, by infusing into the Hearts of Mankind a wrong Opinion of the Institution of Government, and that they may lawfully vindicate themselves from the ill Bargains that their Ancestors made for that Liberty which Nature gave them, and they ought only to have released their own Interest and what concerned themselves, but that it is most unreasonable and unjust that their Posterity should be bound by their ill-made and unskillful Contracts: And from this, Resentment and Murmur, War and Rebellion have arisen, which commonly leave Men under much worse Condition than their Forefathers had subjected them to. Nor is it strange that Philosophers, who could imagine no other way for the World to be made, but by a lucky Convention and Conjunction of Atoms, nor could satisfy their own Curiosity in any rational Conjecture of the Structure of Man, or from what Omnipotency he could be formed or created; I say, it is no wonder, that Men so much in the dark as to Matter of Fact, should conceive by the Light of their Reason, that Government did arise in that Method, and by those Argumentations, which they could best comprehend capable to produce such a Conformity. But that Men, who are acquainted with the Scriptures, and profess to believe them; who thereby know the whole History of the Creation, and have therein the most lively Representations of all the Excesses and Defects of Nature; who see the Order and Discipline and Subjection prescribed to Mankind from his Creation, by Him who created him; and that that Discipline and Subjection was complied with till the World was grown very numerous: that we, after so clear Information of what was really and in truth done and commanded, should resort to the Fancy and Supposition of Heathen Philosophers for the Invention of Government, is very unreasonable, and hath exposed the Peace and Quiet of Kingdoms, the Preservation whereof is the Obligation

gation of Conscience and Religion, to the wild Imaginations of Men, upon the ungrounded Conceptions of the primitive Foundation of Subjection and Obedience, and to their Licence to enervate both, by their bold Definitions and Distinctions.

Because very much of the Benefit of Christianity consisted in the Liberty it gave Mankind from that Thralldom which it suffered under the Law, and in the Manumission and Deliverance from those Observations and Ceremonies, the Apostles took not more care in the Institution of any part of it, than that Men might not be intoxicated with the pleasant Taste of that Liberty, or imagine that it extended to a Lawlessness in their Actions, well foreseeing, and being jealous lest their Opinion of Liberty might degenerate into Licentiousness; and therefore they circumscribed it with all possible Caution, that they might have the whole Benefit to themselves in abstaining from what was grievous and burthensome to them, not the Presumption to disturb other Men: *But take heed lest by any Means this Liberty of yours become a Stumbling-Block to them that are weak*, saith St. Paul, (1 Cor. viii. 9.) Do not dissemble and give Men Cause to believe, by accompanying them in what they do, that thou dost intend as they do, and hast the same Thoughts with them. *Use not Liberty for an Occasion to the Flesh*, is an Injunction of the same Apostle, (Gal. v. 13.) How good a Title soever you have to Liberty, be not exalted by it to Anger, and provoke a Man, who (though by want of Understanding) doth not think himself as free as thou art: No Proportion of Liberty will permit thee to be uncharitable, much less to apply it to satisfy thy Ambition, or any other unlawful Affection. Of all kind of Affectation of Liberty, to which the Soul of Man lets itself loose, there is none ought be more carefully watched, and more strictly examined, than that which is so passionately pretended to, and so furiously embraced, Liberty of Conscience: Other Liberties which Nature inclines and disposes us unto, how unwarrantable soever, may with more Excuse, if not with more Innocence, be indulged to, than that Liberty which seems to take its Rise from Conscience: which in truth, if it be legitimate, is the Dictate of God himself; and therefore, Men ought to tremble in imputing any thing to result from Him, that leads them to the direct Breach of any of his Commandments, indeed that doth not restrain them from it. It is a very severe Limitation by St. James; *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the Law of Liberty*, (James ii. 12.) That Liberty that will not be judged by the Law, is an unlawful Liberty; and Men will find, if they are diligent in seeking, that the Law of Christ, which is the Judge of Christian Liberty, doth oblige all his Followers to submit to the Laws of their lawful Sovereigns, which are not directly, and to their Knowledge, contradictory to his own. Conscience is so pure a Fountain, that no polluted Water can be drawn from thence; and therefore St. Peter pronounces a Judgment upon those, who, upon their being free, *use their Liberty for a Cloak of Maliciousness*, cover their wicked Designs under the Liberty of Conscience, and so make God accessory to the Iniquity he abhors.

Of INDUSTRY.

MONTPELLIER, 1670.

INDUSTRY is the Cordial that Nature hath provided to cure all its own Infirmities and Diseases, and to supply all its Defects; the Weapon to preserve and defend us against all the Strokes and Assaults of Fortune; it is that only that conducts us through any noble Enterprize to a noble End: What we obtain without it, is by Chance; what we obtain with it, is by Virtue. It is very great Pity that so powerful an Instrument should be put into the Hands of wicked Men, who thereby gain such infinite Advantages; yet it cannot be denied but that it is a Virtue which ill Men make use of to very ill Purposes. It was the first Foundation of *Jeroboam's* Greatness: *And Solomon seeing the young Man that he was industrious, he made him Ruler over all the Charge of the House of Joseph, 1 Kings xi. 28.* by which he got Credit and Authority to deprive his Son of the greatest Part of his Dominions. There is no Art or Science that is too difficult for Industry to attain to; it is the Gift of Tongues, and makes a Man understood and valued in all Countries, and by all Nations; it is the Philosopher's Stone, that turns all Metals, and even Stones, into Gold, and suffers no Want to break into its Dwellings; it is the North-West Passage, that brings the Merchant's Ships as soon to him as he can desire: In a Word, it conquers all Enemies, and makes Fortune itself pay Contribution. If this omnipotent Engine were applied to all virtuous and worthy Purposes, it would root out all Vice from the World; for the Industry of honest Men is much more powerful than the Industry of the Wicked, which prevails not so much by its own Activity, as by the Remissness and supine Laziness of their unwary Enemies. The Beauty and the Brightness of it appear most powerfully to our Observation, by the View of the Contempt and Deformity of that which is most opposite to it, Idleness; which enfeebles and enervates the Strength of the soundest Constitutions, shrinks and stupifies the Faculties of the most vigorous Mind, and gives all the destroying Diseases to Body and Mind, without the Contribution from any other Vice. Idleness is the Sin and the Punishment of Beggars, and should be detested by all Noble Persons, as a Disease pestilential to their Fortune and their Honour.

I know not how it comes to pass, but the World pays dear for the Folly of it, that this transcendent Qualification of Industry is looked upon only as an Assistant fit for vulgar Spirits, to which Nature hath not been bountiful in the Distribution of her Store; as the Refuge for dull and heavy Men, who have neither their Conceptions or Apprehensions within any Distance, nor can arrive at any ordinary Design without much Labour and Toil, and many unnecessary Revolvings, which Men of sharp and pregnant Parts stand in no need of, whose rich Fancy presents to them in a Moment the View of all Contingencies, and all that occurs to formal and elaborate Men after all their Sweat; that they view and survey and judge and execute, whilst the others are tormenting themselves with Imaginations of Difficulty, till all Opportunities are lost; that it is an Affront to the Liberality of Nature, and to the excellent Qualities she hath bestowed upon them, to take Pains to find what they have about them, and to doubt that which is most evident to them, because Men who have more dim Sights

cannot discern so far as they: and by this haughty Childishness they quickly deprive themselves of the plentiful Supplies which Nature hath given them, for want of Nourishment and Recruits. If diligent and industrious Men raise themselves, with very ordinary Assistance from Nature, to a great and deserved Height of Reputation and Honour, by their solid acquired Wisdom and confessed Judgment, what noble Flights would such Men make with equal Industry, who are likewise liberally endowed with the Advantages of Nature? And without that Assistance, Experience makes it manifest unto us, that those early Buddings, how vigorous soever they appear, if they are neglected and uncultivated by serious Labour, they wither and fade away without producing any thing that is notable. *Tully's Rule to his Orator is as true in all Conditions of Life, Quantum detraxit ex studio, tantum amisit ex gloria.*

Of SICKNESS.

MONTPELLIER, 1670.

HHealth and a good Estate of Body are above all Gold, and a strong Body above infinite Wealth, says the Son of Sirach, Ecc. xxx. 15. and the greatest Benefit of Health is, that whilst it lasts, the Mind enjoys its full Vigour; whereas Sickness, by the Distemper of the Body, discomposes the Mind as much, and deprives its Faculties of all their Lustre. Sickness and Pain, which is always attended with Want of Sleep, disturbs, if not confound the Thoughts, and rob them of all their Serenity; and infuse broken and melancholy and irresolute Imaginations, which are as grievous and as painful as the Sickness itself. It is one of God's kindest Messengers, to put us in mind of our Folly, and Incogitance, and Excess in Health; and how discomposed and disconsolate soever it renders our Thoughts, it awakens those which have long slept, and presents many Things to our clearest View, which we had laid aside never to be thought of more. Our Memory is much more at our own Disposal in our Health, when Negligence, Mirth and Jollity have introduced such an Incogitancy, that we seldom remember any thing that may trouble us; and if any thing of that kind intrude into our Thoughts, we have many sorts of Remedies to drive it from thence: But Sickness rouses up that Faculty; and above all, suffers us not to forget any thing of that which gives us most trouble in remembring. Every ambitious and every malicious Thought of our own, of which no body can accuse us, every proud and injurious Word, of which no body dares accuse us, and every insolent and unlawful Action, which no body will take upon them to controul, present themselves clearly to our View in their most naked Dress, and will not suffer us to sleep when our bodily Pain and Sickness intermit enough to give us that ease: They are now as importunate and insolent towards us, as they have been heretofore towards others; and take Revenge, on the behalf of those towards whom we have been injurious, upon ourselves. And in this excellent Perspective, through which we see all our Faults and all our Follies, without Varnish or Disguise, it is probable we may discern more than our Physicians can inform us, the very natural Cause of that Sickness and Distemper under which we labour, from some Excess long since committed and now punished. And God forbid that these unwilling and unwelcome Recollections should not make that Impression and Reformation in us which

which they ought to do! which were to disappoint God's Messenger, Sickness, of the Effect for which he was sent; and which indeed is the only way to recover our Health, or a much better and more lasting Health than that which we have lost. But yet we may lawfully and piously say, that all these Recollections and Reflections, which we cannot avoid in Sickness, and which in that Season may as naturally produce Despair as Repentance, are much more seasonable, much more advantageous in Health, when our Memory can much more deliberately reproach us, and all our Faculties can perform their Offices towards such a Repentance, as may in some degree repair the Ill we have done, as well as acknowledge it, and confirm us in such a firm Habit of Virtue, as no Temptation may have Strength enough to corrupt us. A Man may as reasonably expect, by one Week's good Husbandry, to repair the Breaches and Wastes which he hath made in his Fortune by Seven Years Licence and Excess, as to repair and satisfy for the Enormities and Transgressions of his Life in Sickness, that is the Forerunner of Death, and always most intolerable to them who have put off all Thoughts till then, and which at that Time crowd in upon him rather to oppress than inform him. The truth is, Men ought to have no other Business to do in Sickness than to die; which, when the Thoughts are least disturbed, Sickness only makes them willing to do.

Of PATIENCE.

MONTPELLIER, 1670.

PATIENCE is a Christian Virtue, a Habit of the Mind, that doth not only bear and suffer Contumelies, Reproach and Oppression; but extracts all the Venom out of them, and compounds a Cordial out of the Ingredients, that preserves the Health, and even restores the Chearfulness of the Countenance, and works Miracles in many respects; and under this Notion we have in another Place taken a View of it: We will consider it now, only as it is a moral Virtue, a Temper of Mind that controuls or resists all the brutish Effects of Choler, Anger and Rage; and in this regard it works Miracles too; it prevents the Inconveniencies and Indecencies which Anger would produce, and diverts the Outrages which Choler and Rage would commit: If it be not sharp-sighted enough to prevent Danger, it is composed and resolute enough to resist and repel the Assault; and by keeping all the Faculties awake is very rarely surprized, and quickly discerns any Advantages which are offered, because its Reason is never disturbed, much less confounded. There is no Question but where this excellent blessed Temper is the Effect of Deliberation, and the Observation of the Folly and Madness of sudden Passion, it must constitute the greatest Perfection of Wisdom; but it hath in itself so much of Virtue and Advantage, that when it proceeds from the Heaviness of the Constitution, and from some Defect in the Faculties, it is not wholly without Use and Benefit; it may possibly not do so much good as more sprightly and active Men use to perform, but then it never does the harm that quick and hasty Men are commonly guilty of; and as Fire is much easier and sooner kindled than it is extinguished, we frequently find dull and flegmatick Persons sooner attain to a Warmth and Maturity of Judgment, and to a wonderful discerning of what ought or ought not to be done, than Men of quicker and more subtle Parts of Nature, who seldom bear *cogitandi laborem*: Whereas the other, by continual

nual thinking, repair the Defects of Nature, and with Industry supply themselves with that which Nature refused to give them. All Men observe, in the Litigation of the Schools, that the calm and undisturbed Disputants maintain their Point and pursue their End much more efficaciously than their angry and vehement Adversaries, whose Passions lead them into absurd Concessions and undiscerned Contradictions; all the ambitious Designs for Honour and Preferment, all the violent Pursuits of Pleasure and Profit, are but Disputations and Contentions to maintain their Theses, to compass that which Men have a mind to obtain; and though the boldest Men do sometimes possess themselves of the Prize, it is but sometimes, and when it is not warily guarded: The dispassionate Candidates are not so often disappointed, nor so easily discouraged; they are intent and advancing, when the others have given over; and then they enjoy what they get with much more Satisfaction, because they pursued with less Greediness. Angry and cholerick Men are as ingrateful and unsociable as Thunder and Lightning, being in themselves all Storm and Tempests; but quiet and easy Natures are like fair Weather, welcome to all, and acceptable to all Men; they gather together what the other disperses, and reconcile all whom the other incenses; as they have the good Will and the good Wishes of all other Men, so they have the full Possession of themselves, have all their own Thoughts at Peace, and enjoy quiet and ease in their own Fortunes how streight soever; whereas the other neither love, nor are beloved, and make War the more faintly upon others, because they have no Peace within themselves; and though they are very ill Company to every Body else, they are worst of all to themselves, which is a Punishment that Nature hath provided for them who delight in being vexatious and uneasy to others.

Of REPENTANCE.

Sept. 8. 1669.

Repentance is the greatest Business we have to do in this World, and the only Harbinger we can send before us to provide for our Accommodation in the next: It is the only Token we can carry with us thither of our being Christians, which is the only Title and Claim we can make to be admitted into Heaven. It was the only Doctrine the Prophets preached to prepare the World for the Reception of our Saviour; and we may justly believe that his Coming was the longer deferred, by the little Growth that Doctrine had in the Hearts of Men; and it was the principal Doctrine he chose to preach himself after he was come, to make his Coming effectual, and to make way for Christianity, of which they were otherwise incapable. There is not, it may be, a Consideration in the whole History of the Life and Death of our Saviour, upon the ground and end of his being Born, and all the Circumstances of his Living and Dying, which ought to affect us more with Sorrow and Amazement, than that this precious Antidote, which can only expel that Poison which must otherwise destroy us, that this sovereign Repentance is so little thought of, so little considered, so little understood, what it is, and what it is not, that it is no wonder that it is so little practised. It is wonderful with some Horror, that there is not one Christian in the World, how different soever in other Opinions, who doth profess to have any Hope of Salvation without Repentance; and yet that there are so few who take any pains to be informed

of it, or to know how to practise it. It is almost the only Point of Faith upon which there is no Controversy; as if there were a general Conspiracy to make no Words of it, lest it should suppress all other Discords and Contentions. It were to be wished therefore that all particular Persons, who have any Sense of Conscience, or so much as a Desire to live innocently for the future that they may die comfortably, would seriously apply themselves to weigh well what that Repentance in truth is, which they themselves think to be necessary to their Salvation, and without which they even know that they cannot be saved; that they may neither be imposed upon by others, nor impose upon themselves, by imagining it to be a perfunctory Duty, to be taken up and performed when they have a mind to it, and to be repeated as often as they have need of it. And it may be, Kingdoms and States cannot find a better Expedient for their own Peace and Security, and for the composing the Minds and Affections of their Subjects, than for some time to silence all Disputes in Religion, and to enjoin all Preachers, in their Pulpits and their Conversation, only to inculcate the Doctrine of Repentance; that as all People confess the Necessity and profess the Practice of it, so they may be so well instructed and informed of the true Nature and Obligations of it, that they may know themselves whether they do practise it, and whether they are so well prepared for their last Journey as they believe or imagine themselves to be.

Repentance then is a godly Sorrow for having done or committed somewhat that God hath forbidden them to do, or for having omitted to do somewhat that he hath commanded us to do, and which was in our Power to have done. Where there is no Sorrow, there can be no Repentance; and where the Sorrow is not godly, there can be no true Repentance. The Conscience must be troubled and afflicted for having offended God, and principally for that, before it can produce Repentance. Too many are sorry, very sorry for having lost their Time in pursuing a Sin without effect, without compassing their Desire; but this is far from Repentance, and they are as ready for the like new Engagement upon any new Opportunity. Whereas a godly Sorrow exempts a Man from such Temptation, and so fortifies him against it, that all the Advantages of the World could not again prevail with him to commit the same Sin of which he repents, because he so grievously offended God in the Commitment. The Son of *Syrach* could not think of any thing so contradictory and ridiculous, as of a Man that fasteth for his Sins, and goeth again and doth the same; who will hear his Prayer, or what doth his Humbling profit him? God only knows how far the most serious and unfeigned Repentance will enable and strengthen us to resist future Temptation; but we may all know that it is no Repentance at all, that is not attended with a first Resolution never to fall into the same Sin again, whereof he makes a true Repentance; and we may piously believe, that God will support that hearty Repentance to that degree, that we shall never fall into the same again; and if we do find our selves prone to it hereafter, we have much more Reason to conclude that our Repentance was not sincere, than that Repentance hath not Strength enough to secure us against such Assaults. Without doubt we ought not to flatter our selves with an Opinion or Imagination that we do repent, if we do not sensibly feel such a Resolution: That Declaration in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, (vi. 4, 5, 6.) hath very much of Horror in it; *It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, and*

have tasted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to Repentance; since they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open Shame. How far soever it may please God to exercise his Mercy even to those who are so miserably fallen, of which no Man can presume; sure it ought to terrify all Men from that impudent Impiety, as to gratify their Lust, or their Intemperance, or their Rapine, with a Resolution to repent when they have done, and so make that Presumption a stalking Horse to the worst Wickedness and Villany. Such Deliberation and Contemplation upon God's Mercy is more Prophaneness and Blasphemy, than rejecting him out of our Thoughts, or concluding that he cares not what we do. And yet there is too much Reason to fear, that in so frequent Confessions and as frequent Absolutions, there would not still remain the Commission of the same Sins in the same Person, if they did not play with Repentance, and believe they might have it whenever they call for it. *St. Paul* tells us, (*Rom. ii. 4.*) *that the Goodness of God leadeth us to Repentance;* and Men may as reasonably believe that they may be saved without Repentance, as that he will lead those to Repentance, who, upon the Confidence of it, have given their Hands to the Devil, to be lead by him out of all the Roads which lead to Repentance. There are a sort of Cordials, which are purposely made to be administered only in Extremity, when Nature is ready to expire, and not able to perform its Functions; but as those Cordials do not often work their wished Effect, so they are very often forgotten to be applied, or applied too late, when Nature is spent and not able to receive them. If this sovereign Cordial of Repentance be laid aside to the last Extremity, till Nature is so far decayed, that no Vice hath Strength enough to contend, or be importunate for any further Compliance, it is no wonder if it be then forgotten, and Faith be not strong enough to call for it, or to look for any Benefit from it; and though it can never come unseasonably, or unprofitably, or too late, yet it may be deferred so long, that it may not come at all: which they have great Reason to apprehend, who find by Experience that the longer they defer it, the less Mind and Inclination they have to finish it; as Bankrupts have least mind to look over and examine their own Accounts.

It is a common Error, and the greater and more mischievous for being so common, to believe that Repentance best becomes and most concerns dying Men. Indeed, what is necessary every Hour of our Life is necessary in the Hour of Death too, and as long as he lives he will have need of Repentance, and therefore it is necessary in the Hour of Death too; but he who hath constantly exercised himself in it in his Health and Vigour, will do it with less Pain in his Sickness and Weakness; and he who hath practised it all his Life, will do it with more Ease and less Perplexity in the Hour of his Death: as he who hath diligently cast up every Page of a large Account, will better be able to state the whole Sum upon a little Warning in the last Leaf, than he can do which must look over every one of them. Repentance is as necessary to living as to dying well; and being carefully and constantly practised, makes our Lives as profitable as our Deaths comfortable; and the World receives more Benefit by our living well than by our dying well. The frequent revolving our own Errors, Follies and Defects, the correcting and subduing our Passions and our Appetites, all which is Repentance, makes us wiser and honest, and so more prosperous in the Eyes of Men; and a serious Recollection of what we have done amiss towards other Men and towards our selves, is not out of the way

way to a Repentance for having offended the divine Providence: They who do believe (as the best Men surely do) that there is no Day of their Life (from the Time that they knew the difference between Good and Bad) in which they have not thought, or said, or done somewhat, for which they need Forgiveness from God and Man, cannot doubt but that they have Argument for Repentance every Day; and the oftner they make those Recollections, the more chearfully they live and the more chearfully they die: And the laying those troublesome Matters aside and forgetting them, will not serve their Turn, and gives very short Ease; no Man can presume so much upon an ill Memory, but that many Things will occur to him which he had rather forget, and in Seasons in which he is most troubled to remember them; and therefore it was no ill Answer that he gave to one who offer'd to teach him the Art of Memory, that he rather desired the Art of Forgetfulness; *meminerat enim quæ nollet*. The only way to keep the Conscience in a Posture of Confidence, and that it may not be oppressed, (and no Tyranny is so insupportable as the Oppression of Conscience, I mean, the Oppression it suffers from its own Guilt) is frequently to represent to its naked View all its Deformities; which insensibly produces Sadness and Remorse, and Caution against future Assaults; and we have it only in our Choice, whether we will then call them before us and take a Prospect of them, muster them in all their Colours, when we can upon the Matter disarm them, by extracting all their Venom and Poison with an unfeigned Repentance, or let them call and break in upon us when we are weak and in pain, and not able to bear the Surprise. The Philosopher thought it an unanswerable Reason, why he should take an exact Scrutiny of his own Faults and Follies, and not endeavour to hide them from himself by forgetting them, because upon the View of them he could say unto himself (for he knew not whether to rejoice else) *vide ne istud amplius facias, nunc tibi ignosco*; though his own Pardon will not serve his Turn, if he be sincere in the Discovery he is like to find a Pardon more easily from God, than it may be he can obtain from himself. Since then there is so frequent Occasion and so constant a Benefit in the reiterating and repeating our Repentance, and so manifest Danger in the delaying it, methinks all Men should think it meer Madness to put it off an Hour; and when they are not willing that any Benefit they affect in this World should be deferred or kept back from them an Hour, they should yet defer that, which must make their Passage to, and their Station in, the other World miserable above or beyond the most fertile Imagination: And as Men who are to travel through an Enemy's Country, cannot be too solicitous and scrupulous in examining every Clause and Expression in their Pass, and that no Word be left out which may indanger their Security in their Journey, nor too punctual in observing the Limits, and Restraints, and Conditions included therein; so they cannot intently and industriously enough consider this more important Pass of their Repentance, which must conduct them through more dangerous and intricate Ways; that it be sincere, and not liable to any Tergiversations, nor without any of those Marks and Tokens which may manifest the Veracity of it to others, as well as raise a Confidence in themselves of its Security: Nor can they use too much Diligence to raise this Confidence, which concerns them so much, and which above all the Indulgence and Encouragement they can receive from others, can only make their Journey comfortable to themselves.

Acknowledgment is not a Circumstance, but a necessary Foundation of Repentance; he that doth not believe he hath done amiss, cannot entertain

tain a true Sorrow, and hath less reason to repent; and if he doth believe it, he must acknowledge it before he can truly repent. This Christian Duty, this essential and inseparable Part of Repentance, must be seriously thought upon and studied: It is the Scare-crow that frights Men from Repentance, sets up Honour to contest with Conscience, and makes Shame so impudent as to contradict Confession. He who stoops to the lowest and the basest Arts and Actions to commit a Wickedness, would be exempted by Honour from acknowledging it; and he that cannot be restrained by Modesty from the most impudent Transgressions, would be absolved by Shame from making any Confession of it; and yet will not have it doubted but that he is truly penitent. What is this but mocking God Almighty, and hoping to get into Heaven by a counterfeit and forged Pass, which will not get Admittance into honourable Company, which never remits an Injury without a full Acknowledgment and Entreaty of Forgiveness? It is a bare-fac'd Assertion, owned and urged commonly by those, who, being by ill Success brought to the Brink of Despair, carry themselves only to the Brink of Repentance, That Repentance is an Act of the Heart towards God alone, for some Sin committed against his Divine Majesty, and a begging of his Pardon; and therefore the acknowledging that Sin to him alone, and renouncing it with all the Resolution imaginable never to fall into the like again, is sufficient, and need not be attended with any publick Acknowledgment; which would only expose them to the Scorn and Reproach of other Men. It may be so; there may be such Sins, as Thoughts and Purposes of the Heart, which can be known only to God; and it may be, some sinful Actions too, the Acknowledgment whereof particularly to God himself, may be sufficient; and the Acknowledgment of them in publick, how innocently soever intended, may be little less sinful, than the entertaining and committing them. There are Thoughts and Inclinations, and Argumentations of the Heart, which, though subdued and repented, may, being communicated to others, propagate Vice in them, with the Exclusion of all Thoughts of Repentance; and the very Commission of some Sins which the World can take no notice of, would be much aggravated (though piously repented of) by a publick Acknowledgment, which, in many respects and justly would be accompanied with Shame and Reproach; and in such Cases, secret and hearty Repentance and Acknowledgment to God alone, may be sufficient to procure his Pardon and Absolution. But when the Case is not of this Nature, nor made up of these Circumstances; when the Sins and Transgressions are publick and notorious; when many Men have received the Injury, and undergone the Damage and Reproach; when my Neighbour hath been defrauded by my Rapine and Injustice, or traduced by my Slanders and Calumny; the Acknowledgment ought to be as publick as the Offence: Nor can a secret Confession to God alone constitute his Repentance, when others are injured, though He be most dishonoured; and we may, without Breach of Charity, doubt that it is a very faint Repentance, that hath not strength enough to come into the Air, and to beg Pardon and Reconcilement of those whom the Penitent hath offended. True Repentance is a very severe Magistrate, and will strip off all that Shelter and Covering which would make the Stripes to be less sensibly felt, and reckons Shame an essential Part of the Punishment. It is a rough Physician, that draws out the Blood that inflames, and purges out the Humours which corrupt or annoy the Vitals; leaves no Phlegm to cherish Envy, nor no Choler and Melancholly to engender Pride; and will rather reduce the Body to a Skeleton, than suffer those pernicious Humours to have a Source,

from

from whence they may abound again to infest the Body or the Mind. True Repentance is inspired with so much Humility, that it fears nothing so much as to receive too much Respect or Countenance; and is glad to meet with Men as proud and cruel as those Sins were which are repented, and receives Reproach and Shame as Bracelets and Garlands which become it. They, who will not willingly acknowledge to those Persons who have been injured by them, that they have done them wrong, have made but a half Acknowledgment, and half Repentance to God himself; have not put in that Security which can only give them Credit, that they will not do the same again; nor laid that Obligation upon themselves, which would startle them when they shall be about to do it again. Men are not so easily tempted to commit the same Offence again, and to the same Man, which they have before committed and acknowledged to the same Person; and Men may reasonably doubt, that they will not only be inclined to do the same when they have the same Opportunity, but that they resolve to do it, when they pretend to repent, and refuse to acknowledge it: Nor is it possible for any Man who is penitent in truth, to give any Reasons against his Acknowledgment, which will not bring a great Blemish upon his Repentance, and make the Sincerity thereof to be justly doubted.

Besides the Discredit which this want of particular Acknowledgment exposes their Repentance to, and the just Ground it administers to suspect the Truth and Reality thereof, it deprives the Penitent (if we may so call him) of very great Benefit and Advantage he might receive thereby: How far he can reconcile himself to Heaven without it, is worth at least a very serious Doubt; but it is plain enough, that without it, a Reconciliation with Men, which is very desirable by all good Christians, is absolutely impossible. Acknowledgment makes all Accounts even, often satisfies them, and stops all farther Demands; infallibly it prevents the Asperity in demanding; without it the Debt remains still, with the Anger and Indignation of the Creditor: The Debt, how desperate soever, is due; and if it can never be recover'd, it will always be objected; nor is there any other way to raze out the Memory of it, but a free remitting it, which is often due to the Acknowledgment. Acts of State and Indemnity may extinguish all Penalties and Punishments to be inflicted by Law, for Faults committed and Injuries received; and Acts of Oblivion may so far oblige Men to forget the Injuries they have received, as neither to reproach or upbraid those who did them, or to require Satisfaction for the Damage; but no such Acts, nor any Authority under Heaven, can take away the Obligation of Repentance, or inhibit Acknowledgment, which is a Branch of Repentance, tho' it cannot be exacted by any earthly Tribunal. He that performs this Acknowledgment, and hath therewith made his Repentance perfect, hath made his Peace with God, and hath done his Part towards doing it with Men; and if it be refused by them, he hath made himself superior, or at least so equal to them, that his former Injustice hath not so evil an Aspect as to fright him, and they who were injured have only gotten an Argument of Repentance. If Acknowledgment bore no other Fruit but this, that it disburthens the Breast of a Weight that would sink it, and makes Men stand upon the same Level with those who were before superior to them; that it makes the Reproaches which were before due to them, turn afterwards to be Guilt in the Reproacher; it would be a full Recompence for any Pains in the Performance, and would pay a great Debt with a little Money: But when the Thoughts of the Heart can only be known to the Searcher of the Heart, and there is an Evidence due to Men of the

Integrity of the Heart, especially when the Malice and Corruption of it hath been too notorious; Men owe it to themselves, to their Reputation, to their Peace of Mind, to make their Sorrow for what they have done amiss as manifest as the worst of their Actions have been: And the more they are delighted with their Repentance (as a greater Joy and Delight there cannot be in this World, than in Repentance,) the more Delight they take in full and frequent Acknowledgment to those whom they have offended. Repentance is not a barren Tree, that bears only Leaves for Shadow and Repose; but a Tree that *brings forth Fruit meet for Repentance*: Without such Fruit, it must *be hewn down and cast into the Fire*, (Matt. iii. 7, 8.) and Acknowledgment is the least precious Fruit it can bear. Nothing so common amongst Persons of the highest Quality and Degree, when Death approaches, whose very Aspect files off all those rough and unsmooth Appearances, and mortifies all haughty Imagination of a Faculty and Qualification to do wrong, as for Great Men to acknowledge and ask Pardon of their meanest Servants, whom they have treated unkindly; and for Princes themselves to confess Injuries they have done, and to desire Forgiveness of their poorest Subjects. And without doubt, what becomes a Man upon his Death-Bed, would become him better in his full and perfect Health; it may possibly do himself good then, but undoubtedly it would not have done him less before, and his Example would have been much more beneficial to others.

As Acknowledgment is necessary with Reference to Persons, so it is no less with Reference to Places; they who have taught and published any Doctrine which they then thought to be true, and have since been convinced of the Error and Falshood of it, are bound to declare in the same Places, or as publicly, such their Conviction; and to take as much Pains to convince their Auditory of the Error, as they did before to lead them into it. And this is an Ingenuity becoming an honest Man, and inseparable from Repentance; and the greatest Charity that can be shewed towards those who renounce such Publication, is, to believe that they are not sorry, nor repent what they have done; and there can be no Obligation in Conscience upon any Man, to say he is sorry, when he is not sorry; but to believe that he doth repent, and yet not think fit to acknowledge that he doth so, is impossible. They who have preached Sedition, and thereby led Men into unwarrantable Actions by their Authority; and they who have printed Books, and by Arguments from Scripture or other Authority, have imposed upon Mens Understandings, and perswaded Men to believe what is contrary to Scripture, and to that Authority which they have alleged, and are in their Consciences now satisfied that they were then in the wrong; cannot reasonably believe that the asking God Forgiveness in private, and acknowledging their Error to him, is enough to constitute a Christian Repentance that works unto Salvation. If it be reasonable to believe that the Ill which we learn from corrupt Masters, or in evil Conversation, shall, tho' not excuse us, in a great part be put upon their Account who have so corrupted us; it must needs concern those Instructors and Seducers, to do the best they can to undo the Mischief they have done, by giving timely Notice to their Profelytes, that it is not safe for them to follow that Advice they have given them. The Examples of Great Men, and the Discourses of Men eminent for Learning and Piety, have in all Ages drawn many into the same Actions and the same Opinions, upon no other Account than their Submission to their Authority and Discourse; nor in truth can the major Part of Mankind propose a more perfect Rule to walk by, than

than by following the Examples of Men reputed for Persons of Honour and Integrity in their Actions, and submitting their Understandings in Matters of Opinion, to the Direction of those who are eminent for Learning, Judgment and Sanctity; and Reason (which is the Goddess all Men now sacrifice to) hath done its full Office, when it hath convinced them that it is most reasonable so to do. They therefore, who find themselves possessed of this sovereign Authority, though they do not affect it, and have it only by the voluntary Resignation of those who will be so govern'd, had need to take the more care what they say and what they do; and as soon as they know they have said or done amiss, they are obliged in Conscience to make it known to those, who they have reason to believe were led by them. A Man who hath heard a Doctrine preached by a Man whose Learning he believed to be very great, and his Integrity equal to his Learning, or hath seen a Sermon printed, and retains his Reverence for him which he hath reason to do after he is dead, and is as much swayed by his Authority as if he were still alive; such a Man is plainly betrayed, if this Preacher changed his Opinion, repented that he ever preached that Doctrine, and kept his Repentance to himself, and concealed it from any of those who were misled and seduced by him. Methinks, after St. *Austin's* Example, Men should not be ashamed of Retractions; nor could his Example operate so little, if they were endued with his precious Spirit of Recollection and Repentance.

There is another Branch of Repentance, which it may be is more grievous than that of Acknowledgement, which is Reparation; an inseparable Ingredient and Effect of Repentance: which needs startle Men the less, because Conscience never obliges Men to Impossibilities. He that hath stolen more than he is worth, is in the same Condition with him who hath borrowed more than he can pay; a true and hearty Desire to restore is and ought to be received as Satisfaction: *If the wicked restore the Pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the Statutes of Life without committing Iniquity, he shall surely live, he shall not die, (Ezek. xxxiii. 15.)* Robbery and Violence would be too gainful a Trade, if a Man might quit all scores by Repentance, and detain all he hath gotten; or if the Father's Repentance might serve the Turn, and the Benefit of the Transgression be transmitted as an Inheritance to the Son. If the Pledge remained, it must be restored; the retaining it is committing a new Iniquity, and forfeits any Benefit of the Promise; if he hath it not, nor is able to procure it, his hearty Repentance is enough without Reparation: But to enjoy and to look every Day upon the Spoil, and yet to profess Repentance, is an Affront to God Almighty, and a greater Sin than the first Act of Violence, when he did not pretend to think of him, and so did not think of displeasing him: Whereas now he pretends to reconcile himself to God, and mocks him with Repentance, whilst he retains the Fruit of his Wickedness, with the same Pleasure he committed it. He who is truly penitent, restores what he hath left to the Person that was deprived of it, and pays the rest in devout Sorrow for his Trespas. It is a weak and a vain Imagination, to think that a Man who hath been in Rebellion, and thereby robbed any Man of his Goods of what kind soever, and is sorry for it, can pacify God for his Rebellion, and keep those Goods still to himself, without the true Owner's Consent: He ought to restore them, though the other doth not ask them, or know where they are. Nor is his Case better, who enjoys them by Purchase or Gift, or Exchange from another Man, without having himself any Part or Share in the Rapine, if he knows that
they

they were unjustly taken, and do of Right belong to another; he is bound to restore them. Nor is a third Excuse better than the other two; I was my self robbed by others, and am no Gainer by what I have taken, but have only repaired what was one way or other taken from me: Which would not be just, if I had robbed the same Person who robbed me, except I could rescue my own Goods again out of his Hands; and Justice will not allow that, by any Act of Violence, because I cannot be Judge in my own Interest: But to take what belongs to another Man, because I know not who hath done the like to me, is so contrary to all the Elements of Equity, that no Man can pretend to repent and to believe it together. Instead of restraining the Pledge, to hug it every Day in my Arms and take delight in it, whilst it may be the true Owner wants it, or dares not demand it, is a manifest Evidence that I think I do not stand in need of the Pardon the Prophet pronounces; or that I believe I can obtain it another way, and upon easier Conditions. And, indeed, if it could fall into a Man's natural Conception or Imagination, how a Man can think it possible to be absolved from the Payment of a Debt which he doth not acknowledge to be due, nor pretend to be willing to pay if he were able; or how a Man can hope to procure a Release for a Trespass, when he is able to pay the Damage, or some Part thereof, yet obstinately refuses to do it at the time he desires the Release; the Condition and Obstinacy would be the less admirable. It is natural enough for powerful and proud Oppressors not to ask Pardon for an Injury, which they to whom it is done cannot call to Justice for; and for a desperate Bankrupt not to ask a Release from a Man, who hath no Evidence of the Debt which he claims, or means to recover it, if it were confess'd: But to confess so much Weakness, as to beg and sue for a Pardon, and to have so much Impudence and Folly as not to perform the Condition, without which the Pardon is void and of no effect; to ride upon the same Horse to the Man from whom he stole it, and desire his Release without so much as offering to restore it, is such a Circle of brutish Madness, that it cannot fall into the Mind of Man endowed with Reason, though void of Religion. Therefore it cannot be a Breach of Charity to believe that Men of that Temper, who pretend to be sorry and to repent the having done that which they find not safe to justify, and yet retain to themselves the full Benefit of their Unrighteousness, do not in truth believe that they did amiss; and so are no otherwise sorry than Men are who have lost their Labour, and repent only that they ventured so much for so little Profit: Whereas if they felt any Compunction of Conscience, which is but a Preparation to Repentance, they would remember any Success they had in their Wickedness, as a bitter Judgment of God upon them, and would run from what they have got by it, as from a strong Enemy that encloses and shuts them up, that Repentance may not enter into their Hearts.

There is another kind of Reparation and Restitution, that is a Child of Repentance; a Fruit that Repentance cannot chuse but bear; which is, repairing a Man's Reputation, restoring his good Name, which he hath taken or endeavoured to take from him by Calumnies and Slanders: which is a greater Robbery than plundering a Man's House, or robbing him of his Goods. If the Tongue be sharp enough to give Wounds, it must be at the Charge of Balsam to put into them; not only such as will heal the Wound, but such as will wipe out the Scar, and leave no Mark behind it. Nor will private Acknowledgment to the Person injured, be any Manifestation or Evidence of Repentance; Fear may produce that, out of Apprehension

hension of Chastisement; or good Husbandry may dispose a Man to it, to avoid the Payment of great Damages by the Direction of Justice and the Law: But true Repentance issues out of a higher Court, and is not satisfied with submitting to the Censures of publick Authority; but inflicts greater Penalties than a common Judge can do, because it hath a clearer View and Prospect into the Nature of the Offence, discerns the Malice of the Heart, and every Circumstance in the committing, and applies a Plaster proportionable to the Wound and to the Scar. If the Calumny hath been raised in a Whisper, and been afterwards divulged without the Advice or Privy of the Calumniator, it sends him in Pursuit of that Whisper, and awards him to vindicate the injured Person in all Places, and to all Persons who have been infected by it; if it hath been vented originally in defamatory Writings, which have wrought upon and perverted more Men, than can be better informed by any particular Applications how ingenuously soever made, it obliges Men to write Volumes, till the Recognition be as publick and notorious as the Defamation; and it uses the same Rigour, awards the same Satisfaction, upon any other Violation of Truth, by which Men have been seduced or misled: whilst the poor Penitent is so far from murmuring or repining at the Severity of his Penance, that he still fears it is not enough, that it is too light a Punishment to expiate his Transgression, and would gladly undergo even more than he can bear, out of the Aversion he hath to the Deformity of his Guilt, and the glimmering Prospect he hath of that Happiness, which only the Sincerity of his Repentance can bring him to: He abhors and detests that Heraldry, which for Honour sake would divert or obstruct his most humble Acknowledgement to the poorest Person he hath offended; and would gladly exchange all his Titles and his Trappings, for the Rags and Innocence of the poorest Beggar. Repentance is a Magistrate that exacts the strictest Duty and Humility, because the Reward it gives is inestimable and everlasting; and the Pain and Punishment it redeems Men from, is of the same Continuance, and yet intolerable.

There are two Imaginations or Fancies (for Opinions they cannot be) which insinuate themselves into the Minds of Men, who do not love to think of their own desperate Condition. One is, That a general asking God Forgiveness for all the Sins he hath committed, without charging his Memory with mentioning the Particulars, is a sufficient Repentance to procure God's Pardon for them all: The other, That a Man may heartily repent the having committed one particular Sin, and thereupon obtain God's Favour and Forgiveness, though he practises other Sins, which he believes are not so grievous, and so defers the present Repentance of; that if he hath committed a Murder, he can repent that, and resolve never to do the like again, and thereupon obtain his Pardon, and yet retain his Inclination to other Excesses. Which two kinds of Suggestion are so gross and ridiculous, (if any Thing can be called ridiculous that hath relation to Repentance) that no Man is so impudent as to own them, though in truth some modern Casuists are not far from teaching the former; yet if we descend into our selves, make that strict Scrutiny and Inquisition into every Corner of our Hearts, as true Repentance doth exact from us, and will see performed by us, we shall find and must confess, that they are these and such like trivial and lamentable Imaginations, which make us so unwary in all our Actions, so uncircumspect throughout the Course of our Lives, and are the Cause that in a whole Nation of transcendent Offenders, there are so very few

who become true Penitents, or manifest their Repentance by those Signs and Marks with which it is always and cannot but be attended.

God forbid, that Death-bed Repentance should not do us good, or that Death should approach towards any Man who is without Repentance; he who recollects himself best before, will have Work enough for Repentance in the last Minute; and it is possible, and but possible, that he who hath never recollected himself before, may have the Grace to repent so cordially then, and make such a saving Reflection upon all the Sins of his Life, though he hath neither Time or Memory to number them, that he may obtain a full Remission of them. Repentance indeed is so strong a Balsam, that one Drop of it put into the most noisome Wound, perfectly cures it. But that Men, who cannot but observe how a little Pain or Sickness indisposes and makes them unfit for any Transaction; who know how often the Torment of the Gout in the least Joint, or a sudden Pang of the Stone, hath distracted them even in the most solemn and premeditated Exercise of Devotion, that they have retained no Gesture or Word fit for that Sacrifice; I say, it is very strange that any such Man, who hath himself undergone, or seen others undergo such Visitations, should believe it possible that upon his Death-bed, in that Agony of Pain, in those inward Convulsions, Strugglings and Torments of Dissolution, which are the usual Forerunners and Messengers of Death, or can presume upon, or hope for such a Composure of Mind and Memory in that melancholy Season, as to recollect and reflect upon all those Particulars of his mispent Life, as his departing Soul must within a few Minutes give an Account, a very exact Account of; and therefore it cannot be otherwise, and how much soever we disclaim the Assertion, we are in truth so foolish as to be imposed upon by that pleasant Imagination, that there goes much less to Repentance than severe Men would persuade us, and that a very short Time, and as short an Ejaculation, which shall be very hearty, and which we still think so much of in our Intentions that we are sure we cannot forget them, will serve our Turn, and will carry us fairly out of this World, and leave a very good Report of our Christianity with the Standers-by, who will give a fair Testimony. If we did not think this, or did not think at all, which yet it may be is better than thinking this, we should not spend our Time as we do, commit so many Follies and Wickednesses, and give no Cause to the most charitable Man to believe that we are in any degree sorry for either, when he sees us so constantly practise both, and live as we did really think that we are only to account for the last Moment of our Life, and therefore that it is enough if we provide that that shall be commendable and full of Devotion.

The other as extravagant Imagination, that a Man may repent so heartily one particular Sin, that he may be well satisfied that God hath accepted his Humiliation and sealed his Pardon, and yet retain and practise some other Sins, of whose Iniquity he is not yet thoroughly convinced, or of which he takes farther Time to repent, hath gotten so much Credit with many of us, who are willing to persuade other Men, and it may be our selves, that we do heartily detest and abominate some Sin we have formerly practised, and have cordially repented it, though we do too much indulge some other natural Infirmary, which leads us into great Transgressions of another Kind. If nothing of this Argumentation did prevail upon us, we could not at the same Time pretend to have, with a grievous Sense of our Guilt, repented our Rebellion, or any such Act of Outrage, and have washed our Souls

Souls clean from that Sin with our Tears, when yet we retain our Ambition, and have the same impatient Appetite for Preferment that we had before, and which it may be led us into that Rebellion; that we have thoroughly repented every Act of Oppression that we have committed, though we have still Avarice and Desire to be rich, that hath not left us. It may be, the Practice of Repentance hath not been more obstructed by any Thing, than by the customary Discourse, and the senseless Distinction, of true and false, perfect and imperfect Repentance; whereas, if it be not true and perfect, it is not Repentance; if it be not as it should be, it is not at all. There are indeed many Preparations, many Approaches towards it, which well entred upon and pursued will come to Repentance at last; there must be Recollection, and there must be Sorrow, and Sorrow stretched to the utmost Extent, before it can arrive at Repentance; and it must be Repentance it self, none of those Preparatives, that must carry us to Heaven; and that Repentance is no more capable of Inlargement and Diminution, than the Joys of Heaven are, which are still the same, neither more or less. If we do repent any one Sin we have committed, we can have no more Inclination to commit any other, of how different a kind soever from the other, than we could desire, if we were in Heaven, to return to the Earth again; it is Sin it self, in all the several Species of it, in all the Masques and Disguises that it hath ever presented it self to us in, which we detest, if we are arrived at Repentance.

And because, as hath been said before, we cannot make too strict a Scrutiny into our own Actions, nor take too much Care in the compounding this precious Cordial that must revive us and make us live after we are dead, we shall do well frequently to confer with pious Men upon the most proper Expedients to advance this Duty in us; and because Examples are more powerful Motives towards any Perfection than Precepts, we cannot do better than recollect as many of those as our own Experience, or Histories of uncontroverted Veracity, or the Observation of other Men can suggest to us; that by observing the Steps they made towards it, and the Manifestation they gave of it, we may the better comport our selves towards the attaining our End, and the Assurance that we have attained it: And having for some Years lived in a Country, where there is as great Evidence of Sins committed, and as little of Repentance as in any other Country; and having met with there a rare Example of this Kind, and so much the more rare as it is in a Person of the most illustrious Family in *France*, the House of the King himself, and a Thing so known that there is no room to doubt the Truth thereof; I think it very pertinent to the Design of this short Discourse, to insert so much of it as to my Understanding may exceedingly work upon the Minds of other Men: The Person is the Prince of *Conti*, younger Brother to the Prince of *Conde*, next Prince of the Blood to the Children of the Crown and to the King's own Brother, who died in the Year 1664, in *Paris*. This Prince, having great Endowments of Mind, but educated in all the Licence of that Nation, and corrupted with the greatest Licence of it, some Years before his Death had the Blessing to make severe Reflections upon the past Actions of his Life; and thereupon imposed upon himself great Strictness and Rigour, in a notorious Retirement from the Court, in the Conversation of the most pious and devout Men, and in the Exercise of all those Actions of Devotion which become a Christian Resolution, in the Faith in which he had been educated; and being in perfect Health, but well knowing by the ill Structure of his Body that he could not live, the Crookedness and Stooping of his Head and
Shoul-

Shoulders making his Spiration very difficult, and increasing, suffocated him, he made his last Will, beginning in these Words: 'This Day, the 24th of May 1664, I *Armand de Bourbon*, Prince of *Conti*, being in my House in *Paris*, sound in Body and Mind, and not willing to be surprized by Death without making my Will, do make this my present Testament.' And then making that Profession of his Religion, and disposing his Soul in that manner as becomes a pious Man in that Church, whereof he was a very zealous Member, he enters upon the Disposal of his Estate, and used these Words: 'I am extremely sorry to have been so unhappy as to find my self in my younger Age engaged in a War contrary to my Duty; during which I permitted, ordered and authorized Violences and Disorders, without Number; and although the King hath had the Goodness to forget this Failing, I remain nevertheless justly accountable before God to those Corporations and particular Persons, who then suffer'd, be it in *Guienne*, *Xantoinge*, *Berry*, *la Marche*, be it in *Champaigne*, and about *Damvilliers*; upon which Account I have caused certain Sums to be restored, of which the *Sieur Jasse* my Treasurer hath a particular Knowledge; and I have passionately desired that it were in my Power to sell all my Estate, that I might give a more full Satisfaction: But having upon this Occasion submitted my self to the Judgment of many Prelates and learned and pious Persons, they have judged that I was not obliged to reduce my self altogether to the Condition of a private Man, but that I ought to serve God in my Rank and Quality; in which nevertheless I have withdrawn as much as was possible from my Household Expences, to the End that, during my Life, I may restore every Year as much as I can save of my Revenues. And I charge my Heirs, who shall hereafter be named in this my Will, to do the same thing, until the Damages that I have caused be fully repaired, according to the Instructions which shall be found in the Hands of the *Sieur Jasse*, or in my Papers. To this End, I desire the Executors of my Will, and her who shall be intrusted with the Education of my Children, to reduce and moderate, as much as may be, their Expences, that the foresaid Restitutions may be continued every Year, according to my Orders. And if it happen that my Heirs and their Issue have, either from the Bounty of the King, or by any other Way, Riches enough to maintain them handsomely, I will and order that they sell all the Estate which they enjoy as being my Successors; and that they distribute the Price of it amongst those Provinces, and in those Places, which have suffer'd on the Account of the said Wars, following the Orders contained in the said Instructions, if the said Places or Persons have not been already sufficiently repaid by me, or by some other. And if it fall out that my Children die without Issue, so that my Line be extinct, I intend likewise that my Estate be sold, for to be wholly employed in the said Restitutions, my collateral Friends having enough elsewhere.

'I desire that those Papers which shall be found, writ or signed with my Hand, concerning Affairs where I have doubted, if in Point of Conscience I were obliged to a Restitution or not, be very carefully and rigorously examined; the which I pray my Executors moreover, if it be found by Notes written, or signed with my Hand, that I have verified or acknowledged my self to be obliged to any Restitution or Satisfaction whatever, I desire that they may be executed, as if every particular Thing contained in them was expressly ordered by this present Will.' Then he commits the Education of his Children (whom he makes his Heirs)

Heirs) to his Wife, and desires the Parliament of *Paris* to confirm her in the Tuition of his Children; and then names his Executors, who upon his Decease are to become possessed of all his Estate to the Purposes afore-said, and so signs the Will with his Hand the 4th of *May* 1664.

Armande de Bourbon.

His Paper of Instructions was likewise published with his Will, that so the Persons concerned might know to whom to repair. The Words are these: 'The Order which I desire may be observed in the Restitution which I am obliged to make in *Guienne, Xantoinge, la Marche, Berry, Champagne, and Damvilliers, &c.* In the first Place, those Losses and Damages which have been caused by my Orders or my Troops, ought to be repaired before all others, as being of my own doing. In the second Place, I am responsible very justly for all the Mischiefs which the general Disorders of the War have produced, although they have been done without my having any Part in them, provided that I have satisfied for the first. I owe no Reparation to those who have been of our Party, except they can make it appear that I have sought and invited them to it; and in this Case, it will be just to restore first of all to those innocent Persons who have had no Part in my Failings, before that any thing can be given to those who have been our Confederates: The better to observe this distributive Justice, I desire that my Restitutions may be made in such a manner, that they may be spread every where; to the End that it fall not out, that amongst many that have suffer'd, some be satisfied, and others have nothing. But since I have not Riches enough for to repay at one time all those Corporations and particular Persons who have suffer'd, I desire, &c.' and so decreed the Method and Order the Payments should be made in; the whole of which, by his Computation, would be discharged in Twenty Years; but if it so fell out, that the Estate should be entirely sold, the whole Payment was to be made at once; and it was a marvellous Recollection of particular Oppressions, which he conceived might have been put upon his Tenants by his Officers, some whereof were not remediable by Law, by Reason of Prescription, which he declared that he would not be defended by, but appointed that the original Right should be strictly examined; and if his Possession was founded in Wrong, he disclaimed the Prescription, and commanded that Satisfaction should be made to those who had been injured, even by his Ancestors, and before his own Time; and required, that any Doubts which might arise upon any of his Instructions, or in the Cases in which he intended Satisfaction should be given, might and should be examined and judged by Men of the strictest and most rigid Justice, and not by Men of loose Principles.

I do not naturally, in Discourses of this Nature, delight in so large Excursions in the mention of particular Actions performed by Men, how godly and exemplary soever; because the Persons who do them are always without any Desire that what they do should be made publick, and because Repentance hath various Operations in Minds equally virtuous: yet meeting very accidentally with this Record, without having scarce ever heard it mentioned by any Man in the Country, where there is room enough for Profelytes of the same Nature, and Cause enough to celebrate the Example; as I took great Delight in examining and re-examining every Particular, and not being an absolute Stranger to the Subject reflected upon, having been present in the same Country at that Time, I could not conclude this Discourse more pertinently, than with such an Instance at large; presuming that it may make the same Impression upon others that it hath upon me,

and make us the more sollicitous to call our selves to an Account for all Commissions, and to pray to God to give us the Grace to repent in such a way, and to such a degree, as may be most for his Glory, our own Salvation, and the Edification of others towards the attaining the same.

Of CONSCIENCE.

MONTPELLIER, March 9. 1670.

THERE is not throughout the whole Bible of the Old Testament, that Term or Word *Conscience* to be found; nor is it used in Scripture till the Eighth Chapter of the Gospel written by St. *John*, when the *Jews* brought the Woman that had been taken in Adultery before our Saviour, whom they importuned to do Justice upon her; and he, who knew their Malice was more against him than the Woman, said. *He that is without Sin amongst you, let him first cast a Stone at her: And they which heard it, being convicted by their own Conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest even to the last,* (ver. 7. 9.) Nor is the Greek Word *συνηδνησις*, which throughout the New Testament signifies *Conscience*, ever used by the *Septuagint*, (as some learned Men affirm) except only in the 10th Chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, ver. 20. which is thus translated, *Curse not the King, no not in thy Thought*. So that Conscience seems to be the proper and natural Issue of the Gospel, which introduced a stricter Survey of the Heart of Man, and a more severe Inquisition into the Thoughts thereof, than the Law had done. He who could not be accused by sufficient Witnesses to have violated the Law, was thought to be innocent enough; but the Gospel erected another Judicatory, and another kind of Examination, and brought Men who could not be charged by the Law, to be convicted by their own Conscience; and therefore St. *Paul*, in his Justification before *Felix*, after he had denied all that the *Jews* had charged him with, and affirmed that he had broken no Law, added, *And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a Conscience void of Offence toward God and towards Men,* (*Acts* xxiv. 16.) his Behaviour was so exact, that he did not only abstain from doing any Man wrong, but from giving any Man a just Occasion to be offended with him. It is a Calamity never enough to be lamented, that this legitimate Daughter of the Gospel of Peace, should grow so prodigiously unnatural and impetuous, as to attempt to tear out the Bowels of her Mother, to tread all Charity under Foot, and to destroy all Peace upon the Earth; that Conscience should stir Men up to Rebellion, introduce Murther and Devastation, licence the Breach of all God's Commandments, and pervert the Nature of Man from all Christian Charity, Humility and Compassion, to a brutish Inhumanity, and Delight in those Acts of Injustice and Oppression that Nature itself abhors and detests; that Conscience, that is infused to keep the Breast of every Man clean from inroaching Vices, which lurk so close that the Eye of the Body cannot discern them, to correct and suppress those unruly Affections and Appetites, which might otherwise undiscerned corrupt the Soul to an irrecoverable Guilt, and hath no Jurisdiction to exercise upon other Men, but is confined within its own natural Sphere; that this inclosed Conscience should break its Bounds and Limits, neglect the looking to any thing at Home, and straggle Abroad and exercise a tyrannical Power over the Actions and the Thought of other Men, condemn Princes and Magistrates, infringe

infringe all Laws and Order of Government, assume to itself to appoint what all other Men shall do, and out of Tenderneſs to itſelf exerciſe all manner of Cruelty towards other Men: I ſay that this extravagant Preſumption ſhould take or claim any Warrant from Conſcience, is worthy of the Anger and Indignation of all Chriſtians, and of a general Combination to reclaim and bind up this unruly, deſtroying, ravenous Underminer and Devourer of Souls. The Apoſtle, when he preſcribed this Light to walk by in the dark Times of Infidelity, Ignorance and Perſecution, knew well enough how unlimited the Fancy and Pride and Convertures of the Heart of Man were; and therefore he takes all poſſible Care to eſtabliſh the Power and Jurisdiction of Kings and Magiſtrates, and Obedience to Laws under the Obligation of Conſcience, and required Subjection to all thoſe, not only for Wrath (for Fear of Punishment) but for Conſcience ſake: And the ſame Apoſtle thought it a very neceſſary Preſcription to *Timothy*, that he ſhould keep his Dioceſe to the *holding Faith and a good Conſcience, which ſome having put away, concerning Faith had made Shipwreck*; that is, ſome Men, by departing from the Rules of Conſcience, by the Suggestions of Faith and Religion, they made Shipwreck of that Faith and Religion which they meant to advance. Conſcience is the beſt Bit and Bridle, to reſtrain the Licence and Exceſs which Faith itſelf may introduce and give Countenance to: Conſcience can never lead us into any unwarrantable and unjuſt Action; but that is not enough, he whoſe Conſcience does not check and reſtrain him from entering into Actions contrary to God's Commandments, may reaſonably conclude that he hath no Conſcience, but that he lies under Temptation which cannot prevail without laying the Conſcience waſte, and rooting out all that God hath planted there; and a Man may as reaſonably pretend to commit Adultery out of Conſcience, as to rebel or reſiſt lawful Authority by the Obligation of Conſcience; and they who think themſelves qualified for the latter by that Impulſion, can never find Reaſon to ſubdue a ſtrong Temptation to the other. Conſcience may very reaſonably reſtrain and hinder a Man from doing that which would be conſiſtent enough with Conſcience to be done; nay, it may oblige him to ſuffer and undergo Punishment, rather than to do that which might be lawful for him. It is not neceſſary, though it were to be wiſhed, that every Man's Conſcience ſhould be ſo ſharp-ſighted, as to diſcern the Inſide of every Doubt that ſhall ariſe; it may be too hard for me, when another Man may be as much too hard for it, and then I ought not to do what he lawfully and juſtly may do; but this is only the reſtrictive negative Power of Conſcience, the affirmative Power hath not that Force. Conſcience can never oblige a Man to do, or excuſe him for doing, what is Evil in itſelf, as Treason, Murther or Rebellion, under what ſpecious Pretences ſoever, which want of Underſtanding and want of Honesty ſuggeſt where there is want of Conſcience; and it is a very hard thing to aſſert, that any thing can proceed from the Conſcience of that Man who is void of Knowledge, ſince there is ſome Science neceſſary to be ſuppoſed, where there is a Pretence to Conſcience.

He who obſtinately reſuſes, upon the Obligation of Conſcience, to do what the Law under which he lives, and to which he owes Subjection and Obedience, requires him poſitively to do, had need to be ſure that his doing of that which he is enjoined, and denies to do, is in itſelf ſinful, and expreſſly forbid by the Word of God. Doubting in this Point is not Excuſe or Warrant enough; the Reverence he ought to have to the Government and Governors of his Country, that the modeſt believing that a Chriſtian

stian Kingdom, or Commonwealth, cannot combine together to damn themselves, and all who live under them, should have Power and Authority enough to suppress and over-rule all Doubts to the contrary. But if in truth the Matter be so clear to him, that by obeying this Law he becomes a Rebel to God, I know not how his Conscience can excuse him for staying and living under that Government, and from making haste away to be under the Protection of another Government, where no such sinful Action is required, or enjoyn'd; for no Man can satisfy his own Conscience, that though his Courage for the present will support him to undergo the Judgment and Penalty that his Disobedience is liable to, he may not in the End be weary of that Submission; and since the Duty is still incumbent upon him, and may still be required of him, he may not at last purchase his Peace and Quiet with complying in doing that which he knows is sinful and must offend God Almighty; and therefore methinks he should, at the same time he resolves to disobey a Law that is fix'd, and not very probable to be altered, quit the Country where so much Tyranny is exercised, and repair to another Climate, where it is lawful to give unto *Cæsar* what belongs unto *Cæsar*, and to give unto God what belongs unto God. And if his Affection to his Country will not suffer him to take that Resolution, it is probable that his Conscience is not so fully convinced of the Impiety of the Laws thereof; and the same Affection should labour to receive that Satisfaction, that he may be reconciled to give the Obedience the Laws require. The submitting to any present Inconvenience or Loss or Damage, rather than do somewhat that is enjoined by publick Authority to be done; the preferring Reproach and Disgrace, before Honour that must be attended with Compliance and Submission to what is required of us, is no Argument that such Refusal is an Effect of Conscience; Pride, Ambition, or Revenge, will do the same, to raise a Party that will enable him to compass and bring that to pass which he most desires. We see nothing more common, than for Men of much Wit and no Conscience, to impose upon those who have no Wit and pretend to much Conscience, and lead them into Ways which are too rough for their Consciences to tread in, and to Ends that they do not desire; and yet every Step they make is an Impulsion of their Conscience; their Conscience will not suffer them to take an Oath, by which the Wrong they have done may be discovered and repaired, yet that Conscience will not compel them to do Justice, nor restrain them from doing Injury to their Neighbours; it will neither oblige them to speak Truth, that may prejudice a Man they favour, nor to discover a Fraud, by which they may be bound to Reparation. Conscience is made the Refuge of all perverse and refractory Men, when they will not observe the Law, and the Warrant and Incitement to any Wickedness when they are inclined to break it: Whereas Conscience is a natural Restraint within us, to keep us from doing what our foul Affections and Passions may tempt us to; it may be too scrupulous, but it can never be presumptuous; it may hinder us from using the Liberty we have, but it is too modest to lead us into any Excess; it is liable to Fear, but never to Rashness and impudent Undertakings: *For this is thank-worthy, if a Man for Conscience towards God, endure Grief, suffering wrongfully*, says St. Peter, (1 Pet. ii. 19.) But Conscience never carried a Man into Actions for which he is justly to suffer: That is true Tenderness of Conscience, which is tender of other Mens Reputation, shy and wary what they think of others, and not that which out of Tenderness to itself cares not how it wrongs and violates its Neighbours. Conscience is the meekest, humblest Thing

Thing that can be conceived of; and when we find any proud Thoughts to arise within us, such as exalt and magnify our selves, and depress the Reputation of our Neighbour; when we have any unpeaceable Inclination to disturb the Quiet of the State, or the Repose of those who live about us; we may be as sure that those Suggestions do not proceed from Conscience, as that the Lusts of the Flesh do not proceed from the Warmth of the Spirit.

The Tree is known by the Fruit, a good Tree cannot bring forth evil Fruit; and Conscience is best known by the Effects; if the Product be Wrath, Malice, Pride and Contention, we may swear that Conscience is not the Mother of those Children, which can produce nothing but Love, Humility and Peace; and Men have taken too much Pains to intitle her to the other unnatural Issue. I know not how it comes to pass, except it be from a wanton Affectation of the Impropriety of Speech, that Men find out Epithets for Conscience, which may intitle it to as many Reproaches as Men think fit to charge it with: They will have an erroneous Conscience, which no doubt will contribute to as many evil Actions as the Heart or Hand of Man can be guilty of; and they might as well have called it an impious Conscience: when in truth, if it be either impious or erroneous, it ceaseth to be Conscience; It is not consistent with any of those destructive Epithets, nor receives any Ornament from the best which can be annexed to it. Conscience implies Goodness and Piety, as much as if you call it good and pious. The luxuriant Wit of the School-men and the confident Fancy of ignorant Preachers has so disguised it, that all the Extravagancies of a light or a sick Brain, and the Results of the most corrupt Heart, are called the Effects of Conscience; and to make it the better understood, the Conscience shall be called erroneous, or corrupt, or tender, as they have a mind to support or condemn those Effects. So that in truth, they have made Conscience a Disease fit to be intrusted to the Care of the Physician every Spring and Fall, and he is most like to reform and regulate the Operation of it. And if the Madness and Folly of Men be not in a short Time reformed, it will be fitter to be confined as a Term in Physick and in Law, than to be used or applied to Religion or Salvation. Let Apothecaries be guided by it in their Bills, and Merchants in their Bargains, and Lawyers in managing their Causes; in all which Cases it may be waited upon by the Epithets they think fit to annex to it; it is in great Danger to be robbed of the Integrity in which it was created, and will not have Purity enough to carry Men to Heaven, or to chuse the Way thither. It were to be wished, that some pains were taken to purge away that Dross, which want of Understanding or want of Honesty have annexed to it, that so it may prove a good Guide; or that that Varnish may be taken from it, which the Artifices of ill Men, have disfigured it with, that it be no longer the most desperate and dangerous Seducer: lest Conscience of Gratitude, for Civilities and Obligations received, dispose Women to be unchaste; and Conscience of Discourtesies and Injuries done or intended to be done, provoke Men to Revenge; and no Villany that ever enter'd into the Heart of Man, but will pretend to be usher'd thither by Conscience. If it cannot be vindicated from these impure and impious Claims, it is pity but it should be expunged out of all Discourses of Religion and Honesty, and never mentioned as relating to Christianity: Let it be assigned and appropriated to the Politicians, to cover their Reason of State with, and to disguise all Treaties between Princes with such Expressions, that they be no longer bound by those Obligations than they find

the Observation of them to be for their Benefit or Convenience; let it be applied only to the Cheats and Couzenings of this World; to the deceiving of Women in Marriages; to the Over-reaching Heirs in Mortgages and Purchases: but let it never be mentioned in order to our Salvation in the next World, or as if it could advance our Claim to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Solomon was the more unexcusable for departing from it, by his knowing what the Calm and Ease and Tranquility of it was; and he could not express it better than when he says, that *a good Conscience is a continual Feast*. Now there can be no Feast where there is not Amity, and Peace and Quiet; a froward, wayward, proud and quarreling Conscience, can never be a Feast, nor a good Guest at a Feast; therefore it cannot be a good Conscience: Anger and ill Words break up any Feast; for Mirth, that is of the Essence of a Feast, and a great Part of the good Cheer, is banished by any ill Humour that appears: It is not the Quantity of the Meat, but the Cheerfulness of the Guests, which makes the Feast; it was only at the Feast of the *Centaurs*, where they eat with one Hand, and had their drawn Swords in the other; where there is no Peace, there can be no Feast. Charity and Tenderneſs is a principal Ingredient into this Feast: The Conscience cannot be too tender, too apprehensive of angrying any Man, of grieving any Man; the Feast is the more decently carried on, never interrupted by this Tenderneſs. But if it be tender at ſome Times, scrupulous to ſome Purpoſes, is ſtartled to do ſomewhat againſt which it hath no Objection, but that it is not abſolutely neceſſary to be done; and at other Times is ſo rough and boiſterous, that it leaps over all Bounds, and ruſhes into Actions diſhoneſt and unwarrantable; neither the Tenderneſs or the Preſumption hath the leaſt Derivation from Conſcience: and a Man in a deep Conſumption of the Lungs can as well run a Race, as a tender Conſcience can lead any Man into an Action contrary to Virtue and Piety. It is poſſible that the frequent Appeals that are made upon ſeveral Occaſions to the Conſciences of ill Men, do in truth increaſe their Love of Wickedneſs; that when they are told that their own Conſciences cannot but accuſe them of the Ill they do, and they feel no ſuch Check or Controul in themſelves, they believe from thence that they do nothing amiſs, and ſo take new Courage to proſecute the Career they are in. It is a very hard Thing to believe, that the worſt Men can do the worſt Things without ſome Senſe and inward Compunction, which is the Voice of their Conſcience; but it is eaſy to think that they may ſtill and drown that Voice, and that by a Cuſtom of Sinning they may grow ſo deaf as not to hear that weak Voice; that Wine may drive away that Heavineſs that indiſpoſed them to Mirth, and ill Company may ſhut out thoſe Thoughts which would interrupt it: And yet alas, Conſcience is not by this ſubdued; they have only made an unlucky Truce, that it ſhall not beat up their Quarters for ſome Time, till they have ſurfeited upon the Pleaſure and the Plenty of Men; it will diſturb and terrify them the more, for the Repoſe it hath ſuffered them to take. If the Strength of Nature, and the Cuſtom of Exceſſes, hath given the debauched Perſon the Privilege of not finding any Sickneſs or Indiſpoſition from his daily Surfeits; after a few Years he wonders to find the Faculties of his Mind and Underſtanding ſo decayed that he is become a Fool, and ſo much more a Fool if he does not find it before he comes to that Age that uſually reſiſts all Decay; and then every Body ſees, if he does not, the Unhappineſs of his Conſtitution, that it was no ſooner diſturbed by thoſe Exceſſes. If the luſtful and voluptuous Perſon, who ſacrifices the Strength and Vigour of

of his Body to the Rage and Temptation of his Blood, and spends his Nights in unchaste Embraces, does not in the Instant discover how much his Health is impaired by those Caresses, he will in a short Time, by Weakness and Diseases, have good Cause to remember those Distempers: And so that Conscience that is laid asleep by a long licentious Life, and reprehends not the foulest Transgressions, doth at last start up in Sickness or in Age, and plays the Tyrant in those Seasons when Men most need Comfort, and makes them pay dear Interest for their Hours of Riot; and for the Charms they used, to keep it in that Lethargy that it might not awaken them. And since it cannot be a Feast, because it is not a good Conscience; being an evil one, it must be Famine, and Torment, and Hell it self. In a Word, no Man hath a good Conscience, but he who leads a good Life.

On an Active and on a Contemplative Life, and when and why the One ought to be preferred before the Other.

IT hath been the Business, or rather the Vanity and Want of Business in many Persons of Wit and Fancy, especially of the *Italian* Nation, to discover and find out, whether an active and practical Condition of Life, or whether a speculative Repose, and a Life dedicated wholly to Contemplation, be to be elected and preferred by a prudent Man, in order to his own Content and Happiness; and they have taken great Pains to determine, from the Consideration of the Nature of Mankind, from his Constitution, Appetites and Affections, and from the Accidents of humane Life, and the Instability of Fortune in the Transactions thereof, and even from the End of the Creation of Man, and his own most justifiable End in Life, which of the two he should dedicate himself unto, and set his Heart upon; when they might as profitably have spent their Time in the Disquisition, whether a Man who is obliged to make a long Journey, should choose to undertake it upon a Black or a Bay Horse, and take his Lodging always in a publick Inn, or at a Friend's House: To which the Resolution, after how long a Time soever of considering, must be, that the Black Horse is to be made use of, if he be better than the Bay; and that the Inn is to be preferred, if the Entertainment be better there, than it is like to be at the Friend's House. And how light and ridiculous soever this Instance may seem to be, it is very worthy to accompany the other Debate, which must be resolved by the same Medium. That a Man of a vigorous and active Spirit, of Perspicacity of Judgment, and high Thoughts, cannot enter too soon into the large Field of Action; and to confine him to Retirement, and to spend his Life in Contemplation, were to take his Life from him. On the other Hand, a dull dis-spirited Fellow, who hath no Faculties of Soul to exercise and improve, or such as no Exercise or Conversation can improve, may withdraw himself as far as he can from the World, and spend his Life in Sleep, that never was awake; but what kind of Fruit this dry Trunk will yield by his Speculation or Contemplation, can no more be comprehended, than that he will have a better and more useful Understanding after he is dead and buried.

For

For the better going through this Disquisition, let us first examine what these Men mean by a contemplative Life, (for the Definition of an active Life will be easily comprehended) which ought to be embraced with so much Greediness; and we shall find that for the most part they suppose or require such Preparations towards it, and such Qualifications in it, that are no more the natural Effects or Product of Contemplation, than the Thoughts and Affections are the same which carry a Man to a Horse-Match, and which accompany him to a Funeral. They who are the strict Admirers and Commenders of Contemplation, and would have the whole Life to be dedicated to Contemplation, have exercised themselves in very little of it; but have taken their Model out of the Lives of some few pious Men, whose Lives have been written long after their Deaths, by Men who had heard much of their Praises, without knowing their Persons; and so their Actions are transmitted to Posterity, according to the Fancy of the Writer, not the true Image of the Liver. They annex a severe Solitude for the Innocence of it as necessary to Contemplation, since Conversation interrupts it; nor will they allow studious Men, who use indefatigable Industry in the reading and revolving the Writings and Labours of learned Men in the several Sciences of Knowledge, to be in the Number of Contemplators; supposing that the variety of their Reading, and their continual Consultation with learned Men, hath too much stirred up their Fancies, and provoked their Curiosities to a farther Acquaintance with the World, and the Temptations thereof, which have dazzled and corrupted the Integrity of their natural Judgments; and these Men would have a Solitude and Contemplation to be always together, without other Books than what serve for the help and exercise of their private Devotions, spending all their Thoughts upon the Contempt of the World, and the Love and Admiration of the Goodness of God and of the Joys of Heaven, and such other excellent Speculations of Virtue and Piety, as never were or can be the Effect or Companion of an original and affected Solitude; but hath its Rise from Observation, Wisdom and Experience. They who observe and consider, as there is Subject-Matter enough in the World for such Observation and Consideration, how very few Men there are, how liberally soever educated, who are ever by themselves, or know how to think, may reasonably wonder how those stupid illiterate Men, who pretend to dedicate themselves, but are sacrificed by the Avarice of their Friends, to that which they call a contemplative Life, can spend their miserable Lives; how Men who cannot think, and have known nothing of the World, can contemplate upon the Vanity and Iniquity of it; or how Men who have never been instructed in the Attributes of God, or the Mysteries and Injunctions of Religion, can contemplate the Joys of Heaven, and the Lives of Saints and Angels. Neither Virtue nor Piety come by Nature or Chance, but are learned and taught and studied; and Contemplation is an Art, and the Child and Faculty of Knowledge. The old Race of Hermits, if there was ever any such, is long since expired: St. *Jerome*, whom they make their Christian Pattern, after much Experience of the Softnesses and Excesses of the World, staid not long in that melancholy Retirement; but after some good and pious Reflections and Resolutions, retired again into the World, and mingled with the greatest Contentions in it; and St. *Austin* in a short time left the Solitude he affected, knowing well that he could do much more good in the Cities and Company of Men, than in the Woods and Desarts. Monkery, that was founded in Solitude and Silence, and all possible care taken by its Founder, that it should not be entangled in any Offices

of Religion, but be wholly vacant to Cogitations, which can very improperly be called Contemplation when they are rude and unpolished, was quickly weary of its Institution; and its Disciples made haste to get themselves absolved from the Rigour of their Rule, and to be manumitted, and enfranchised into the Business of the World, to be Priests and Preachers and Confessors; and over and above the Enjoyment of their own ample Endowments, to be admitted to all the Honours and Pomp the Charge is capable of; insomuch, that for near a Hundred Years together *Rome* had no Bishop but a Monk of the Order of St. *Bennett*, who had done all he could that none of his Children should receive any Spiritual Orders, or be conversant in Courts; and Solitude grew to be so much abominated, that there was a particular Act made in a Council at *Clermont*, in the Year One Thousand Ninety Five, by which it was ordained that a Monk who was possessed of a Benefice should be obliged to have a Companion for Conversation, lest he should become brutish by being conversant only with Ruffians; so little Reverence was then entertained for that Contemplation which they now magnify themselves upon.

It is a difficult thing here to contain myself from reproaching and inveighing against those Orders of Religious Men and Women, who are, under Pretence of Conscience and Piety, deprived of that Liberty which Nature requires, and the Law of God allows; the one by Vows almost impossible to be kept, and affected and inconvenient Habits, which makes them ridiculous to all Men at first Sight, and exposes the Health of Body and Mind to apparent Danger; and the other to unreasonable Vows and strict Inclosure from the rest of the World: At least, I cannot but enquire by what Warrant or Permission from God Almighty, by what Countenance, Testimony of Example, from the Primitive Times of Christianity, and the Practice of Persons of confess'd Piety and Wisdom, such an Institution, hardly consistent with either, and so opposite to the Benefit and Policy of all Christian Kingdoms and States, hath found Credit or Commendation, or Toleration, in all Countries where the *Roman* Religion is received; or rather how it supports it self (as it is now exercised) even against the Ecclesiastical and Civil and Municipal Laws of those Nations, and against the Power and Jurisdiction and Right of all the Bishops and Catholick Clergy of those Countries. For as the Laws of the Church originally restrained all Persons from entering into such Vows, without the full Consent and Approbation of Parents, and before they were of an Age much greater than is now required, and for failing in either of these Points declared their Vows to be void; so they were always under the Government and Jurisdiction of the Bishops. An Abby and a Monastery was in the same degree of Subjection to the Bishop, as any other Parish or Church in his Diocese was; and the Exemption of them from the Discipline by the Pope's Authority, is such an Incroachment upon the Laws of all Countries, and upon the Dignity and Prerogative of Princes, that it shakes the Foundation of all Government in all Catholick States, and is Evidence of the insatiable Ambition that is inseparable from the Bishop of *Rome*, to insinuate under the Notion of Spiritual Power, and to possess himself of the Temporal Authority. For what can be more Temporal, than the Power which the Pope assumes over all Monasteries and Religious Houses; and which makes all those Inhabitants, which are a vast Number of People, more his Subjects than the Kings; and which in some fatal Conjunction may probably prove the Ruin of the greatest Monarchy? Since it is notorious enough, that in all Catholick Rebellions those Fraternities are dis-

posed by the Pope, though against the King; of which there needs no other Instance, than that never to be forgotten League in *France*, supported by three successive Popes against a Catholick King, in the End assassinated by the impious Hand of a Fryar. After which there can be nothing more stupendious, than that Princes who do allow some Spiritual Jurisdiction to reside in the Pope, do not cause it to be defined, at least by the Body of their own Clergy, what that Spiritual Jurisdiction doth signify, and how it must extend; and they would then see how far those Religious Fraternities would submit, and conform to those Definitions. When I say, that those Foundations, under the Rules they now profess, have no Warrant from Scripture, nor from the Example or Practice of Antiquity; I am not ignorant that there were many pious and devout Men who did, upon several Occasions, and in several Seasons, separate and retire themselves from the Splendor and Noise of the World, to a quiet and peaceable Solitude: and this was most practised in the Infancy of Christianity and in Pagan Regions; and had no more Resemblance to the Rules and Constitutions of these Men, than St. *Bruno* had to the Prophet *Elijah*. But since the Argument we are upon, of a solitary and contemplative Life, to which all these Societies, more or less, pretend to be instituted for, doth naturally enough lead us to take a View of this affected Condition of Living; let us with some Liberty consider the Rules they are to observe, and the Vows they make, (which is the Soul of their Religion) and we shall the better be able to examine and make some Judgment of the Piety and Merit, the Lawfulness and Warrantableness of their Profession and Obligations; without any purpose of reproaching the Memory of the Founders of those Orders, or of the Persons of those who have professed; of whom there have been very many learned and very pious Men: whose Devotion, and Virtue, and Integrity of Life, deserve to be revered and imitated, tho' they were not without those Weaknesses, and Infirmities and Defects, which keeps them from being the Objects of Adoration which is assigned to many of them.

The Vows then that these Men make, and which constitute their Religion, and without making which no Man can be admitted to it, are Three; of Poverty, of Chastity, and of Obedience; and these are common to all religious Orders, though they have not all the same Signification: which is a wonderful Latitude in a Vow, and is explained either by some original Determination by the Founder, or by a more modern Indulgence or Reformation by some Bull from the Bishop of *Rome*, who hath Power to dispence with and absolve them from all their Vows: And so there is a great Difference between the Poverty of the *Benedictins* or the *Jesuits*, and the Poverty of the *Capuchins*; and yet the Vow is the same, and in the same Terms, and without any Gloss upon it, that is taken by all Three; but the Two former wisely interpret their Vow of Poverty to oblige them singly to have no Property of their own, but they may enjoy all the Effects of Wealth and Plenty out of the Stock of the Community; the other poor Men literally affect Poverty in the highest Degree that Life can be preserved, with what uneasiness soever, insomuch as it is not lawful for them to provide or retain what may be necessary for to Morrow, nor to have two Habits nor two Pair of Shoes. Let us now examine the Nature and the Effect of every one of these Vows; and from thence examine the Benefit and Advantage that redounds from thence to the Church of Christ, or to the Prosperity of Nations. And in the first place, what is the Virtue, and where is the Beauty of this Poverty, that we should so much

much affect it, be so solicitous for it as to bind our selves by an Oath, a Vow to live in Poverty. Indeed, to behave our selves honestly, and decently, and patiently in Poverty, when it shall please God to inflict it upon us, is a Virtue and Duty the Christian Religion obliges us to; not to despair whilst it is upon us, nor to despair of overcoming and getting out of it, but to submit to God's good Will and Pleasure, and to wait his Time for our Delivery, as we do or must do in all other Punishments and Diseases with which he pleases to visit us: for Poverty is a Punishment, and Poverty is a Disease, from which we may as lawfully pray to be preserved or delivered as from the Plague; I say, it is a Punishment, a Judgment inflicted by God; *The Drunkard and the Glutton shall come to Poverty, and Drouziness shall cloath a Man with Rags*, says Solomon, Prov. xxiii. 21. It is the Legacy bequeathed to Vice and Luxury, and Idleness; and therefore how it comes to be so desirable, as to be attained by a Vow, to be a Foundation in Religion, and a proper Means to advance it, is very hard to comprehend, and had need of better Arguments than are contained in any of the Founder's Rules, or the Bulls which confirm them. If you will believe Solomon, *The Destruction of the Poor is their Poverty*, Prov. x. 15. how it should be a necessary Ingredient to Salvation, may be worthy of Question. It was indeed frequently practised in the Infancy of Christianity, to sell all that they had and give it to the Poor; but it was never a Precept or Injunction of Christianity. It is true, that our Saviour, to convince the Vanity and Hypocrisy of a *Pharisee*, who bragged as if he had performed the whole Law, bid him *sell all he had, &c.* which he knew he would not do, but went away melancholy. Poverty will never make a Man a Christian; nor when he is one, can he do as much good as if he were rich. The giving all they had to the Poor, which was, I say, practised much in the Infancy of Religion, was a very efficacious Argument to get Credit to the Persons who preached, not a Principle of the Doctrine which they preached: When most Men were so transported with the Vanity and Pleasure and Wealth of the World, and their Hearts so much set upon it that they loved nothing else; Men who despised all that, and gave that away which would have given them all that, and imposed those Severities upon themselves which were most contrary to what all others affected, could not but be conceived to find some inward Pleasure and Joy in the Doctrine which they professed: Yet I say it was never a Precept, an Injunction of Christianity; there were as good Christians, who did not sell all they had, but kept it and enjoyed it, and it is probable did much more good than they who had nothing. We may believe that the Expression of *selling all that they had and giving to the Poor*, which was never done in our Saviour's own Time, is not clearly understood; that the Distribution was not in their own Power, but brought to the Apostles to be distributed as they thought fit, we have reason to believe; and if it were possible to believe the large Volume of the History of their Saints, we shall find that all they who are remembered chiefly for selling all they had, and giving it to the Poor, are mentioned after their Sale to have built Churches and founded religious Houses; which Men who had nothing could never have done: so that the most natural understanding of those Expressions is, that they suffered not their Estates to descend to their Heirs, but disposed it to pious Uses. Poverty never made such Alms.

Sure we are, that they who sold or gave all they had, never lived themselves afterwards by begging; many laboured and took pains for their living,

ving, it may be were contented to receive Alms from a charitable Hand; but how Men came to be enjoined to beg for their Living, how Begging came to be of the Essence, to be a Badge of Religion, we shall not find till those Times in which Religion was degenerated, and private Men took upon them to contradict the Laws of God and Man in the Institution of Orders, which they called Religion, and prescribed Rules to be observed which contradict Nature, deprive them of the most precious Treasure of Health, and of the Liberty that God hath not only permitted, but directed to be used: *The Sluggard will not plough by reason of the Cold, therefore shall he beg in Harvest, and have nothing*, Prov. xx. 4. is the Judgment the Spirit of God hath inflicted upon Laziness, upon Men who will not labour for their Living. It is a strange Presumption, a Contradiction of the Will and Mind of God himself, to erect Societies, and constitute Fraternities, whose Religion obliges them not to labour, and requires them to beg. That there should be a Body of a Hundred Thousand Christians, and there are many such Bodies, whose Conscience will not suffer them to work, and whose Impudence to beg is justifiable, is such a Contempt of Scripture, and Rebellion against the politick Laws of all Government, that less than the believing that our Saviour himself gave the Rule from a Mountain in *Italy*, as God himself gave the Law to *Moses* from Mount *Sinai*, cannot excuse; which no other begging Order but that of St. *Francis* pretends to do. Little did King *David* think, who was a Prophet, and a Poet, and an Orator, when he poured out his Complaint and Curse against the greatest Enemies of God, many believe upon the Foresight of *Judas*; *Let his Children be continually Vagabonds, and beg; let them seek their Bread also out of desolate Places*; that there would ever be a Race of God's Children, who should continually beg their Bread without being Vagabonds, and seek and find it too in the most desolate Places, amongst People much poorer than themselves, who beg, and it may be steal, that they may give to a begging Fryar. We may lawfully enquire what Spell there is in Begging; a thing so infamous in the Law and the Gospel, that it should be thought the Way to Heaven. That infamous Steward, who had the Impudence to cheat his Lord and to waste his Estate, when he was called to an Account, had yet the Modesty to be ashamed to beg; there was such a universal brand upon Begging, that he would make any other shift rather than be reduced to beg; it seems he was weak and impotent, which is the common Excuse, he could not, he was not able to dig, yet he was ashamed to beg. Begging hath often found an Excuse, often met with Compassion in many Countries, but was never made or allowed to be a Profession by any well ordered Government; it hath even been infamous; and though there was a certain Beggar that got into Heaven, it was a metaphorical Beggar, but a Beggar in a Parable. I confess, it is a very hard Matter to handle this Mystery of Iniquity with that Gravity, that any thing that relates to Religion would require; especially since so many very eminent Men for Learning, and truly I believe of pious and devout Lives, have grown up in several Ages amongst them who have observed those Rules and Orders; but we may lawfully believe, that they would have been more learned, and probably have been as pious and devout, if they had been educated according to those Collegiate Constitutions, which were the proper Seminaries of Learning and Religion, in all Ages before they, their Rules, or their Vows were heard of in the World. We may believe, that there is not that universal Contagion covers those Gardens, that no wholesome Plant for Food and Medicine can be planted or grow near it; and

and yet we may believe too, that the Soil is not so fertile, nor the Air so pure, that it nourishes all it feeds to such a wonderful Lustre in Religion, that by observing his Vows he is as sure to go to Heaven, as if he were there already, as every Novice of the Order of St. Francis is, when he hath made his Vows; when the Superior, who admits him, declares, *Et Ego, ex parte Dei, si has Regulas observaris, promitto tibi vitam aeternam.* It is not at all to be wondered at, it would be in truth a great Wonder if it were otherwise, that amongst so many Millions of the Regular Clergy there should not sometimes a Man of Eminence in Learning and Virtue appear; for there must be many Millions, when the General of St. Francis's Order alone can bring into the Field One Hundred Thousand Subjects, and leave every Altar sufficiently supplied and provided for; what Numbers then must arise of Monks and Fryars, and other Regular Orders, which swarm in every Kingdom? And when any such Man appears, the World is sure to hear of him; out of the Multitude of those, who having made those Vows, are put to Death for the most odious Crimes and Wickednesses that can be committed; of those who, out of Sorrow and Desperation for having made those Vows, have made themselves away, and become their own Executioners; of those who, continuing all their Lives in the same Professions, have never produced any Fruit that is the effect of Study or Industry, or done any worthy Action whereby to be remembered; of those who, for notorious Vice and Debauchery (which must be very notorious and infamous) are ejected and expelled out of those Corporations and Fraternities, after they have made their Vows; and lastly, of those, who have been and are sheltered under those Vows to be lazy and useless to Mankind, under the Stile of Lay-Brothers, *fruges consumere nati*: I say of all those there is no Inventory, no Record kept; and if there were, every Nation would blush to behold what a Rabble of Wretches they have nourished, for every single Man who hath been an Honour to the Church or State. And after all this, the old Collegiate Institution, the Nurseries and Schools of the too much neglected Secular Clergy in all Kingdoms, have in all Times brought out more Men of extraordinary Parts in Knowledge, and Eminency of good Life, than all the Monasteries in the Country; and by the Computation the World can make, the single College of *Sorbonne* produces more of that kind in every Age, than all the Regular Foundations in *France*, though you reckon the *Jesuits* in the Number, as you ought to do; though they have no mind to be comprehended under that Appellation, but would rather be thought Collegiate, if that did not imply too much Subjection to the Bishop.

Let us, in the next place, take a short View of the Mortifications and Constraints, not voluntary, but enjoined and imposed; and so cannot be so properly called Mortification, as that which is the effect of a devout Mind, and from thence imposed upon a Man's self by himself; and consider whether the Knowledge or Practice of Christianity is advanced, or improved, by those rigorous Severities. Why those antique, uneasy, unhandsome and unwholesome Cloaths? Why no Linnen, no Shoes, or such as are no more Guard against Cold than none? Why to this uncomely and uncleanly Wardrobe, so little Meat, as cannot satisfy Nature, and less Sleep than it requires? It is not natural to believe that there can be great Fervour of Devotion from these cold Ingredients; nor can Men who believe the Way to Heaven to be full of Bryars and Thorns, chuse to walk thither bare-foot. Is Health the greatest Benefit and Blessing that God can bestow upon us in this World? insomuch as he cannot commend the Love of himself to us

under a more conjuring and prevalent Expression, than because *it shall be Health to thy Navel, and Marrow to thy Bones*, Prov. iii. 8. Whatsoever he would endear to us, that we may set a true Value and Price upon it, he describes by what we do or ought to value most; *The Tongue of the Wise is Health*, Prov. xii. 18. And are we grateful enough for this precious Jewel, in a voluntary Endeavour to drive this Health from us, at least to impair it; to dry this Marrow which he hath given us as Comfort and Strength to our Bones? Mortification may be very seasonable, sometimes necessary; it leaves the Root unhurt, and preserves even the Sap, and only dries up or pulls away some Ebullition or Excrecence from the too much Heat thereof; and it may be Nature it self is the best Judge of the Season, and of the Proportion when this Mortification ought to be applied; it is first sensible of its own Rankness, and of any ill Humour that invades it, and hates all Excesses as much as it doth the Effects of them, Pain and Sicknes. If we do not corrupt the Integrity of our Nature by our own ill Manners and ill Conversation, Nature will always be a very good Counsellor and a very good Physician to us; but this Consternation, this Maceration, by perplexing all the Faculties of Nature, and enervating the Strength of it, is a sawcy Contradiction of God's Wisdom in the Creation, and appointing those Offices to be performed by Cold and Weakness for which he assigned Warmth and Heat; and if Piety and Prayer be the Result of a devout Mind, there should be as much care taken to support the Health and Vigour of that Mind, as to cherish the Body for the strongest Exercise or Encounter; and we may as reasonably believe, that a Man can wrestle best when he is in a Fit of a Quartan Ague, as that he can pray most effectually when his Limbs are rotting with Cold, and his Spirits failing for want of Bread. They who will impose a Severity, and exercise a Discipline upon themselves, which Nature doth abhor and God doth not command, ought to do it at their own Charges, and can neither expect Reward in Heaven nor Reverence upon Earth for their Folly; and a *quis re-*
quisivit, may put them to a Blush in one Place, as it will do in the other. He who affects Poverty, and prefers Sicknes before Health that he may be devout, may as well pray for the Plague, that he may have good Company. No Man will deny, that Fasting is a pious and religious Practice, but it is as Physick, not as Diet; he that fasts too much doth not fast at all, for no Man can be said to fast who is not able to eat; and it is worth the Observation, that in that religious Exercise the Physician is allowed a Judicatory above the Bishop, and he can dispense with it for the Health of his Patient, though the Church enjoins it: so tender and compassionate is Divinity and Religion to preserve, and cherish, and cultivate that Comfort of human Life, Health; whilst those who profess Religion are so merciless and tyrannical, that they will not dispense with a Man, who by his Rule is bound to Fish, to eat Flesh for the Recovery of his Health or Preservation of his Life; and the Pope himself, who dispenses with all other Vows, dissolves all Contracts, and absolves all Perjuries, dispenses with Adulteries, and legitimates Bastards, cannot give a poor *Carthusian* leave to eat a Chicken, though it would redeem him from the Grave. What this kind of Pageantry, these Stratagems of Supererogation may amount to in Heaven, God only knows; but we do not know that he hath forbidden us on Earth to be as merry in the Consideration of them, as it is lawful for us to be at other Spectacles of Vanity and Levity. If I intended this Discourse for any other Purpose, than the informing and exercising my own Understanding, I would not observe (because the Observation may do hurt) that

that Fasting, which was commanded and enjoined with so many inconvenient Circumstances under the Law, is no Gospel-Duty, no Precept enjoined: We shall find it sometimes, not very often, commended in some devout Persons who used it according to the Law, when our Saviour himself and his Apostles were strict Observers of the Law; but in all the New Testament not once positively enjoined to be practised, as all other Christian Duties are: because it cannot, it ought not to be used but according to the Constitution and Temper of Mens Bodies; and to oblige all Men to fast alike, is as unreasonable, as to command them to wear the same Clothes, or to keep the same Diet.

Let us see now whether their other Vow, of Chastity, bear better Fruit than that of Poverty; whether it be more lawful, more necessary, than the other. That Chastity is a Christian Duty required of all Men, and enjoined to all Men, is not nor cannot be denied by any Christian; and the Chastity of the Marriage-Bed is as much Chastity as the Chastity of a Virgin, and as commendable, and as meritorious; to which our Vow in Baptism and our Vow in Marriage as much oblige us, as any other Vow can do. If the Commandment of God doth not restrain us, it is not probable that a Vow will do it; and if the true Intention and Meaning of this Vow may be judged by the natural Comment of the Actions of most who take it, it is to be interpreted as an Oath against what is lawful, and in our Power to do, rather than to restrain us from what is unlawful; and if it were not for the Sophism and Dissimulation of interpreting an Oath in a Sense contrary to theirs who administer it, he doth much better comply with his Vow of Chastity, who marries, and commits no other Trespas against it than in Marriage, than he that lets himself loose to the Remedies of Fornication and Adultery, which all the World knows are too much indulged by those, and not more by any than those who have taken a Vow of Chastity: Nor do very many of their Casuists dissemble the determining, that Fornication is a much less Sin than Marriage, and give such a Reason for it as may induce us to believe, that the End of the Vow is only against Marriage, and not against the other; for they say, he that falls into that Sin by the Impetuosity of Nature, hath committed only one Sin that Repentance absolves him from; but he who marries lives in a constant Course of Sinning, that excludes Repentance: and so by this Subtlety they presume to make that an unpardonable Sin, which was instituted by God himself as a proper and natural Remedy against Sin; and permit the other, (for excusing in those Cases is permitting,) which God Almighty hath pronounced Damnation upon. If there be not some such Purpose of Delusion, why a Vow to be chaste, rather than a particular Vow for the Observation of the other nine Commandments, if a Vow be a good Expedient towards the keeping them? We should think that every Sin hath too much Weight in itself, to be made more heavy by our own Inventions: No Man can pretend that Chastity is more a Virtue, to have more of Merit, by being preserved under a Vow, than if it were upon the pure Impulsion of Grace and Virtue; but on the contrary, if it be violated, the Sin is much greater, by the Addition of that of Perjury to the other of Uncleannefs. It may reasonably be suspected or imagined, when our own Vows and Oaths are called for to strengthen God's Commandments, that there is some Stratagem to evade them, and to put some Gloss and Interpretation upon the Duty, that may make it somewhat else than what he hath enjoined: No Man can believe that the Chastity of a pious and devout Mother, is less meritorious, of an inferior Allay, to that of the Daughter miserably betrayed

trayed into a Monastery to save a Portion, and into a Vow to keep that which is not in her Power to lose, otherwise than by vexatious and repining Wishes; and it is worth the Enquiry, whether there be not much of the Virtue itself lost or diminished, in the Restraints, Constraints, and Inclosure, to which it is made liable. Who ever heard of the Temperance of a *Capuchin*, who is allowed no more to eat than will sustain Nature? *Multum interest, utrum peccare aliquis nolit, an nesciat.* No Man ever attained the Fame of Sobriety, who never had it in his Power to drink any thing but Water. A Man who was never in War, nor saw an Army, may as well pretend to the Honour of a great General by having read *Cæsar's Commentaries* and *Polibius*, as a miserable Nun can pretend to the Glory of Chastity, who knows nothing more of it than by reading the canting Language of Mother *Teresa*, and the Lives of the Virgin Martyrs; *Instrumenta illis explicandæ nequitiae defunt.* It ceases to be Virtue when there is no Election; and a Man who is tied in a Room by a Chain, may as reasonably expect to be thought to be delighted with Contemplation, as a Woman shall be believed to be devoted to Chastity, who is shut up from all possible Conversation with Mankind. Of the sad Effects and Consequence of these unhappy Vows and Inclosures, every Monastery can give Instances enough; and the Courts of Judicatory, of Judgments given on their behalf who have found Means to escape from those Captivities, and sued for their Portions, and the Sentences thereupon, are published at large in all their Pleadings.

In the last Place then, let us consider the third Vow, of Obedience; which hath so fair an Aspect, that it can hardly be suspected to have any evil Intention; it prevents Confusion, and supports Order and Government; where there is no Obedience, there can be no Government. Obedience is such an Evangelical Virtue and Precept, that you shall rarely find it used throughout the Scripture in any ill Sense; Commands may be unreasonable and unjust, and yet the Obedience is requisite. They who are under the Obligation of Obedience, are excused for doing many ill Things; and therefore, a Wife who receives stolen Goods from her Husband, without any Guilt in the Theft, shall not be punished, because she ought to obey her Husband, and ought not to suspect him, and less to accuse him. But there are Commands so notoriously unjust, and unquestionably unlawful, that no Person ought to be obedient to them. Let us therefore examine whether this Vow doth not intend such a kind of Obedience as they wish should be obligatory in those Cases; that it should be an Obedience that should controul Obedience. They do not pretend that this Vow obliges them to the Obedience of the Laws of the Country, or of the Magistrate in the Country where they live; nay, not to the Canons and Constitutions of the Church; to the which, tho' they profess Obedience, they do not think that they have broke this Vow, when they have broken one or more of them. The State then is not the more safe or secure for their having made this Vow of Obedience; it may be so much the contrary, that it may be undone by the Influence of this Vow; it is a Vow of Obedience to their Superiors of that Order, of which they are, exclusive to all others, to the Rector or Superior of the Monastery or Convent, to the Provincial of that Province of the same Order, to their General, and, as the upper and highest Wrung of the Ladder, to the Pope, where all their Obedience is terminated. So then, let the Law prescribe what it will, and the King command what he will, their Obedience to either is not the Subject-Matter of this Vow; but whatever the one or the other enjoins, is con-

controlled by the Pope; which enables him to disturb the Peace of all Kingdoms, as far as the Regulars of those Kingdoms are able to assist him; and how much that is, the Relapses in several Kingdoms have too fully declared; and therefore every Catholick Prince is to value his Security upon the Friendship of the Pope, more than upon the Fidelity of his own Subjects: Whereas all the Bishops and Secular Clergy have their Dependence so entirely and solely upon the Crown, that it is not in the Power of the Pope himself to seduce them from their Allegiance; and why they should not be able to discharge all those Offices in the Church, which were originally committed to them, without the Help of those Interlopers, may be justly wonder'd at; and that these Vow-Makers should be thought so necessary, when every one of their Three Vows is directly against the Wealth, or against the Strength or the Peace of the Kingdom; and is so far from any Foundation in Policy, that it is in the face of all politick Constitutions, and worthy rather of Wonder at the Folly of those Times, which permitted Men to be Founders at other Mens Charges, to draw a Company of Men together to be fed and kept by those who know them not, to establish Laws and Rules contrary and destructive to Policy, to make Vows contrary to Nature, and to introduce Factions into Church and State, by superinducing a sovereign Jurisdiction over the Conscience of those who are born Subjects to another Prince; and lastly, to constitute a new and contradictory Clergy, which renounce all Obedience to Bishops: I say, all this is rather worthy of Wonder, than future Approbation or Connivance, that the Church may be reduced within that Inclosure in which our Saviour left it, to be directed and instructed by learned and pious Bishops, in Subjection to and under the Government of those Christian Kings who are appointed by him to reign over us.

To return then to that kind of contemplative Life from whence this Excursion led us; and to the Virtue and Merit whereof these Monasticks, or some of them, do pretend, as founded and dedicated to Contemplation. If the Disquisition we have already made concerning them doth exempt us from taking farther Consideration of them and their Obligations, we will make no Stay in considering that solitary kind of Life, which hath heretofore been affected by some pious Persons, and whose Examples many of those Cloisters would be thought to follow; forgetting that they had no other Cloisters than the wild Forest, and Trees for their Habitation, nor any other Company than of Beasts, more innocent, for the most part, than the Men from whose Conversation they retired: which unhappy Reason might in this degenerated Age of License perswade many to retire to the same Solitude, but *omnia nobis mala solitudo persuadet*, and there is no such Man in the World, that is known and cared for, that owns and avows such a Solitude; and the little Number of Hermits that yet inhabit the World, are the most absurd, ignorant, stupid Creatures that can be seen; and sufficiently manifest the Weariness they have of being alone, by the Content they take to be seen and spoken to; and exactly make good the old Observation, that there is a Race of Men, *cui non satius sit cum quolibet esse quam secum*: which is the best, how lamentable Excuse soever, that too many Men have for never being alone. We will suppose therefore, that the Meaning of this Comparison, or rather Enquiry into the Preference of an active or a contemplative Life, is, to enquire whether a Man who engages himself in the Business of the World, and by Degrees comes into the Administration of a great Part of it, doth by this Activity become a better Member of the State in which he lives, attains to be a wiser

Man, and finds within himself a greater Tranquility and Consolation of Mind ; or whether he who declines the Experience of worldly Actions, or bearing any Part in the Managery of them, and retires to the reading the best and the wisest Books, and to the Conversation that such a Retirement is like to give him the Opportunity of, may not thereby arrive to Faculties, which may equally enable him to advance the Honour, and Service, and Benefit of his Country ; to a Wisdom more infallible, by the Advantage he hath of Leisure to peruse the best Books, in which he is conversant with the Manners and Dispositions and Natures of all Nations, as well as with their Actions and Lives, and often finds this very Question disputed and determined ; and from these Inquisitions, and the Observations which will naturally occur to a dispassionate Considerer, may not at least equally result such a Serenity of Mind, such a Mastery of all inconvenient Affections and Passions, as may constitute that Knowledge, and Peace, and Quiet, that is the Comfort and Blessing of the highest Conditions of Life. And I conceive, from the Question thus stated, and upon the several Branches thereof, all things may be said, which are pertinent to the full Consideration of this Argument. But then we must first agree upon the Signification of all Terms and Expressions which we shall use, and upon such equal Concessions to both, as may not give such Qualifications to the one above the other, as may make him superior at the first Moment of entering into the Lists : as we must not suppose him who is dedicated to Contemplation to be rude and illiterate, for then Books will yield him no more Observation than Stones will do ; nor the other of an active Mind to be of an infirm or diseased Body, which will put a quick End to his Activity. We must then suppose them to be equally qualified for the Work they have to do ; that he who designs an active Life, hath those Parts and Faculties which contribute most to the Advancement of that Design ; I speak of those Parts and Faculties which are his own, and from within, not those from without, in the Assistance of Friends and Patrons ; and that the other, who retires to Contemplation, is as well qualified towards it, that he hath at least a Love of Learning, and an Inclination to Industry : and then in God's Name let their several Advantages by Nature, the Warmth and Fire in the one, and the Flegm and Melancholy in the other, assist and contribute all they can to the Lustre and Perfection of each. We will, in the first Place, begin with the Survey of our contemplative Man, because we shall be longer in finding him out ; for the Thing not being so easily reduced to a Definition, the Person cannot so easily be found. It shall suffice, that we look upon our contemplative Man as a Person without having ever undergone a Part in Business, and without any other Knowledge relating thereunto, than he attains to in Books, and by that kind of Conversation that is natural to that Retirement ; and I have given him at least as large a Field to exercise himself in as any Man hath challenged : And we look upon an active Man, as one who is so much engaged, entangled, and even oppressed with Business, that he hath not Time and Leisure to retire to any other kind of Contemplation, than every honest Man (how busy soever) enjoys from the Reflection and Observation which he makes from his own and the Actions of other Men ; which is as narrow a Circle as we can contain him in : and we will see which of these Trees bear the better Fruit.

We have got the start from our Man of Business by the Testimony of the Son of Sirach, *The Wisdom of a learned Man cometh by the Opportunity of Leisure, and he that hath little Business shall become wise ;* and

and yet it seems he would have him have some; he doth not say, he that hath none: and no doubt by a little, he means Business enough, so much as may contribute to Wisdom. The determination of the Philosopher will hold good to the World's End, and he was Friend enough to Retirement, *imperfectum & languidum bonum est in otio sine actu projecta virtus*: It must be the Good, and not the Ease, the contemplative Life produces; and the Wisdom and publick Benefit, not the private Wealth, that results from the active Life, that must determine this Controversy. It would very much advance this Discourse, if, towards the more perfect modelling it, we could agree upon some Instance of a particular Man, or a Race of Men, who in such a contemplative Life had yielded such Fruit and Benefit to their Countries, as have preserved their Memories still fresh to Posterity; or who being called out of it to serve their Country in any active Employment, have brought those ready Parts and Faculties, as have equalled all that Experience hath supplied, and been crowned with Success in Councils and Enterprises equal to those who have had the Advantage of the contrary kind of Education. Of this last sort I doubt very few Examples will be brought, except they call up some of those old *Greek* and *Roman* Officers, who, either from the Satiety they had of Action, and unwillingness to lose any of the Honour they had gotten, or from the Oppressions they underwent, retired from the Noise and Trouble of all Courts and Camps, to a Solitude that may properly be called rather Recollection than Contemplation; and of this sort of Men Instances enough may be given both Ancient and Modern, of many excellent Persons who have with great Glory and Success returned into the greatest Crowd of Business of all Natures: But all these carried the same Virtue and Wisdom with them into the Retirement that they brought back from thence, and were always the Children of Action, and lodged only for a short Space of Time within the Quarters of Contemplation, and where probably too they might have contracted some Rust not easily filed off. Of the first kind indeed of those who, in and from the contemplative Life, brought a great Treasure of Learning Knowledge and Wisdom into the publick Stores and Receptacles, in the Improvement if not the Invention of Arts and Sciences, and the devising many Expedients and Prescriptions for the Benefit of human Life, they reckon *Lycurgus* and *Solon*, and all the Law-makers, all the Philosophers, all the most famous Orators and the best Historians, and would have it believed that all learned Men led contemplative Lives; whereas in truth there were very few, if any of them, who were not much versed in the Business of the Age in which they lived. We cannot doubt but *Lycurgus* and *Solon*, and all other Law-makers, were not only well skilled in the Laws of Nature, but in the Nature of Mankind, and the Constitution, Temper, Humour and Affections of their own Citizens, which could be learned only by Conversation, Experience and Observation; which distinguishes the Active Life from the Contemplative or Speculative. *Aristotle* was a great Courtier, being Tutor to the greatest King, and in the greatest Court the World then had; and by his good Breeding, gave great Beauty and Lustre to the Philosophy of the Age before him, which had been studied too much in the dark. Can any Man think *Demosthenes* or *Cicero* to be contemplative Men, when they governed the greatest Actions of their several Republicks, and were the most active Men in both? And though *Tully* was the greater Magistrate, having been the highest, yet *Demosthenes* had the greater Power in the Councils of that Senate, and was as much hated and feared by *Alexander* as ever the other had been by *Cæsar*. For the Historians, I think a Man
may

may very warrantably say, that there was never yet a good History written but by Men conversant in Business, and of the best and most liberal Education. *Polybius* was a Counsellor, and an Officer in a Part of the Wars which he writ. *Livy* was in the Court of *Augustus*, well known to the Emperor, and in great Grace and Conversation with the Favourite, and so acquainted with all the Transactions of the World. *Tacitus*, besides his noble Extraction, had his Education in the near Trust of two great Emperors, *Vespasian* and *Titus*, underwent several great Employments and Offices in the Commonwealth, and was afterwards Consul in the Time of *Nerva*, after whose Death he began to write his History. It is not a Collection of Records, or an Admission to the View and Perusal of the most secret Letters and Acts of State, (though they are great and necessary Contributions) which can enable a Man to write a History, if there be an Absence of that Genius and Spirit and Soul of an Historian, which is contracted by the Knowledge and Course and Method of Business, and by Conversation and Familiarity in the Inside of Courts, and the most active and eminent Persons in the Government; all which yields an admirable Light, though a Man writes of Times, and Things which were transacted for the most Part before he was born.

Upon this Argument we have the Instances of Four eminent Persons of the Age in which we live, who were all Men in their several Degrees of great Lustre in the World, who all writ Histories of the same or near the same Times; insomuch as there are very few signal Persons, and few important Actions, which are mentioned in any one of them, of which either of the other are silent; against the Veracity of either of which there is no very material Objection, and yet Two of these are by so much preferable before the other Two, that the first may worthily stand by the Sides of the best of the Ancients, whilst both the others must be placed under them; and a Man, without knowing more of them, may by reading their Books find the Difference between their Extractions, their Educations, their Conversations and their Judgment. The first Two are *Henry D'Avila* and Cardinal *Bentivoglio*, both *Italians* of illustrious Birth; the former a *Florentine*, the other of *Ferrara*, and so proper enough to be called a *Roman*. *D'Avila* was an Officer of Trust and Confidence in the Family of the famous *Catherine de Medicis*, Queen, and almost King too, of *France*, during the Reign of four great Kings of that Nation; and had himself a Command of Horse in the Army and Enterprizes of which he writes, and a Participation of the Counsels. *Bentivoglio* was of that Family, which as Princes had governed *Bentivoglio* for many Years; he was Clerk of the Chamber to *Clement* the Eighth, by or near the Time that he was twenty Years of Age; then Nuncio in *Flanders*, and afterwards in *France*, till he was created Cardinal shortly after the Death of *Henry* the Fourth; and though his History be of the War of *Flanders*, and that of *D'Avila* of the Civil Wars of *France*, yet those Countries had so much to do with each other, that as they were for the most part of the same Time, so they often set forth and describe the same Actions with very pleasant and delightful Variety; and commonly the greatest Persons they have occasion to mention were very well known to them both, which makes their Characters always very lively. Both their Histories are excellent, and will instruct the ablest and wisest Men how to write, and terrify them from writing. The other Two were *Hugo Grotius*, and *Famianus Strada*, who both wrote in *Latin* upon the same Argument, and of the same Time, of the Wars of *Flanders*, and of the *Low-Countries*. The great *Grotius*, who may justly be esteemed as good, if not the best

best Scholar that Age brought out in which he lived, had in his Education, in his Profession, in the Offices and Employments he bore in his own Country whilst he lived there, and in the Encouragements and Honours he enjoyed in other Courts and Kingdoms, when he was banished from his own Country, all the Conversation and Experience that is requisite to make the sublimest Person: And a great Man he was to all purposes, and could not be without a profound Judgment; though it was not of an Allay that sparkled in the *French* Court, where he continued many Years Ambassador for the most active Crown of *Sweden*: Yet his History, which he valued above many other his excellent Works, and more deliberated upon it before it was finished, and cast his Eye over it more after, did not satisfy the Expectation the World had of it, neither in the Life and Spirit of it, nor in the clear Description of the Councils upon which great Enterprizes were undertaken, nor the Conduct of those Enterprizes, with a lively Representation of Persons and Actions, which makes the Reader present at all they say or do; in all which the other Two excel, and will admit of no Comparison to be made with them on his Behalf; as if the unpolished Nature of his Country, and the heavy Genius of *Delft*, where he was born, hung some Plummets upon his Spirits, that neither his incomparable Parts, and Experience in great and active Employments, nor the Air of *France* itself, could ever shake off. *Strada* had, to the Subtlety of the Climate in which he was born and bred, and to the Education of a *Jesuit*, who are most unreasonably believed to be the most politick People in the World, the Advantage of being a Client and Dependant upon the House of *Parma*; and to have the Perusal of all the Memorials, Letters, Commissions, and Transactions of that most illustrious Prince, whose Actions could not but be a great Part of the History he was to write; and of his most renowned Mother, who deserves a Place in the first Rank of the noblest Women in the World: of all which he was so full, that he had not room to contain the other necessary Advertisements and Collections which are requisite to the compiling a legitimate History; so that he hath rather written the Life and Character of *Alexander Farnesius* (who deserved all that could be said of him) than the History of that Time which he pretends to do, and of which he scarce mentions any one Action, with any Vigour of Mind or Power of Words, that hath not relation to that Family; which, with the visible Declension in his second Decade from the Exaltation of the first, and his having left no Materials behind him for a third, which he pretended to have finished, together with some Pedantry in his Style, leaves what he hath writ liable to some Exceptions, tho' I think not all which Cardinal *Bentivoglio* unreasonably reproached him with, or rather they who thought every thing that great Cardinal writ, how cursorily and perfunctorily soever, worthy to be published; amongst which his Reflections upon *Strada*, and some other Fragments, may be reckoned.

What I say of the different Value of Histories, according to the Qualifications of the Persons who write them, no doubt hath been the Reason that so small, if any Part of our own is tolerably set out: for I cannot reckon any History or Relation, of how long or short Time soever, performed in any Degree of Perfection, when as important, or at least very important Particulars are totally left out as those which are inserted, and which were comprehended within the Limits of that Time, the Account whereof is pretended to be given; this may be said of that Part which is most exact in the History of *England*: Which proceeds from the want of Encouragement of fit Persons, who know how to call for Contributions,

butions, (for the ablest Man will need large Contribution) and are themselves conversant with the universal Transactions of *Christendom* during that Time of which they write; as he who would write the History of *England* during the last Hundred Years, or any Space of Time more or less before or after that Time, will do it very imperfectly, if he doth not take a Survey of the Councils and Actions of all his Neighbours, to which many domestick Actions do so much relate, that they are scarce to be understood without some Light from the other; which makes Annals an imperfect kind of History, and rather Memorials for History than History it self; and he who would write that of *England* well, if it be before the Time of *Henry* the Eighth, (it will be convenient since) had need draw many Materials from *Rome*, (which may be done easily enough) with which Court that of *England* had for the most part a nearer Conjunction and Communication of Councils than any other Court had: Whereas it hath been the Fate of our Country, which hath in all Ages been the Field of great and noble Actions in Peace and in War, and hath contributed so much to the Growth and Improvement of Arts and Sciences (all which are the most proper Subjects of History) to have its Transactions derived to Posterity by Men, who have had no other Excuse for their Presumption but their good Will, and who hardly knew so much of the Times in which they lived themselves, as the Monks did of those in which they lived, and from whence they drew their most material Ingredients; which, were they are not altogether untrue, are such obscure Truths, so blindly and lamely set down and described, that a History compounded out of them can have very little Beauty; yet in the Dearth we suffer of the Records of ancient Times, they would be of great Use to an industrious and a pregnant Man, who, by examining other Evidence and of other Countries, would state many Things clearly, which are in those Authors very obscure. I say, as to the Compiling the best and most useful History, that Spirit and those Faculties are necessary, which few but Men of Action and Experience are possessed of; so the Truth is, the best of Books of any other kind, and of what Science soever, have been written by Men of Experience and Wisdom, who have another Compass in considering and weighing and digesting their Thoughts and Conceptions, and select and urge what is for their Purpose much more pertinently, than Men meerly of Contemplation, of how great Learning soever, use to do; as any Man must confess that the Method of Cardinal *Perron*, who was a Man of Business all his Life, and of Cardinal *Richlieu* in what he writ of Controversy, though he was a Man of much more Business and much less Study than the other, hath somewhat that draws more Attention, and their Arguments more Subtlety and Vigour, and their Answers more rational and substantial, than we find in the Writings of merely contemplative Men, or of those who consult only with Books, tho' we reckon Cardinal *Bellarmino* himself of the Number, who, no doubt, was a much better Scholar, as far as the being a Scholar depends upon the reading many Books, than both the other two: And we have a fresh Memorial of a later Cardinal, whose Reputation of Learning, Subtlety and Understanding, raised him to that degree that the sacred College might have the Assistance of a Person of so rare Endowments, Cardinal *Pallavicini*; who no sooner came into the Conclave, a Place where the greatest Sagacity in discerning and determining is required, but he was discovered to be a Man of Wit, that could not be contended with; of Fancy and Invention, that could not be restrained or applied; and of a Judgment so unsteady and unfixed, that when others made no Objections, he overthrew it

it always with his own: So that the only Use they made of him in all Congregations was, that when any Delegates or Committees were named to digest or prepare any Business, that Cardinal who desired to obstruct the Affair, and hinder the Passage of it, always named Cardinal *Pallavicini* to be one of the Committee; who had so rare a Faculty in perplexing, that few could unravel what he made intricate.

There is indeed a Class of Men, who will believe that they are maliciously forgotten, if they are not mentioned as a convincing Instance and Evidence and Manifestation of the Learning, and Wisdom, and rare Parts of the speculative and contemplative Life; which is the School-men: who being purely and merely Men of Contemplation, have illustrated all Arts and Sciences, and have prescribed a Method of examining and judging, that Men of the most active Parts find great Ease and Improvement by the Observation of it. I am contented that they give each what Testimony they please, and that they assume the Title of being *Learned* and *Subtle*, and what other Title they will, but of being good for any Thing. It had been happy for Religion and the Church of God, if they had been all bred Ship-Carpenters, or Lock-smiths, or Gun-smiths, or Granado-makers, or any other kind of subtle Artificers, so they had never been put to School beyond to read and to write. They are the best Laveerers of the World, and would have taught a Ship to have caught the Wind that it should have gained half in half, though it had been contrary, and would have long since found out the North-west Passage, or a shorter. They would have made a Key no bigger than a great Pin, which would have driven Five and Thirty Bolts and Mortar-pieces, that might have carried Granadoes farther than the greatest Cannon can shoot a Bullet. They might have enriched the World with many of these Inventions both for Use and Beauty, if they had not been fatally directed to the Love and Contemplation of Learning; of which they never undertook to handle any Part that they did not deform, and deface, and render unintelligible. They have corrupted and spoiled the noblest and most significant Language of the World; a Language of the greatest Eloquence and greatest Clearness, that hath ravished and possessed all Ears, that hath captivated the Understanding and Judgment through that Avenue; and have left *Latin* without a Monosyllable, or one soft or grateful Word: and instead thereof, have filled the Mouth so full of large and unweildy Words, that it can hardly utter in a Dialect that is intelligible, and hath made the whole Mass of the Language fitter to be used in the *Bear-Garden* than in Places of civil Conversation. I wish I knew, or that any Body would inform me, (for I have no other Displeasure to them than I have to those mineral Men who are School-men in Metals, who to extract a Crown's worth of Silver, would spoil as much Lead as would cover a House) what Benefit the World hath received from them; what Piece of Learning they ever took in their Hands, which they did not leave worse than they found it; what Difficulty they ever undertook to explain and resolve, in which they did not tie more Knots than there were before. They have stripped natural Philosophy of all its Reason and Perspicacity, moral Philosophy of all its Probity, and Divinity of all its Religion; by confounding all with canting Terms, which are not capable of being translated into any Language; with Distinctions, which so perplex and alter and cover the Subject, that a Man knows not where to find what he looks for, nor how to apply what he hath found. There is that fatal Distemper in their Brain, that when they do make any Excursion, or fall out of the Wilderness of their affected Words into the spacious and pleasant

pleasant Fields of polite Learning, as some of them sometimes do; especially St. Thomas, with as great Flights in Devotion as the Wit of Man can suggest, which from him yield infinite Benefit, Information and Delight, so that a Man may be sorry that he ever kept the other Company; yet in the very Height of that noble Career, if they come near the Brink of their School-Learning, that Precipice casts them over Head and Ears into the Abyss of their profound and insignificant Definitions and Distinctions, that a Man would wonder how they come, in so clear a Sun-shine, so suddenly to meet with thick Mists and Clouds, to cover and conceal them. I am well content that they enjoy the Honour and Preferment, which in the spacious Fields of their unlimited and unrestrained Contemplation they have purchased for themselves; and am glad they have had the Modesty never to contend in any Field of Action, but when they have been laughed off the Stage; and it is pity but they who have gotten any considerable Profit from them, should make ample Acknowledgment to their Memory, though they will never be able to make amends for the precious Time that hath been cast away upon them.

Since we have not been yet able to discover one Instance of a Man who hath awaked out of the Dream of Contemplation, and by the Treasure he brought with him from thence, hath quickly appeared a Man of so ripe an Observation, and so well qualified for the greatest Business, that he seemed born to teach and never to learn, we have but one other Enquiry to make; which if we should not do, we shall be thought purposely to decline that Station, that we might not meet with that Crowd of Instances as would determine the Question; which is the Court of Rome: That consisting only of Ecclesiastical Persons, whereof many have been said even from their Infancy to have left the World, and have lived out of it till they have been very old, and have then been called again into it to the Exercise and Dispatch of the greatest Business of the World, must be thought to have obtained all those great Endowments and Advantages they have above other Men, from the sole Light of Contemplation; many having been called out of the dark Cloysters, in which they have spent their Lives, to mount into the highest Judicatory of the World, and to take Charge both of this World, and the World to come. Upon which Suggestion I have the less Reason to enlarge, having gotten the Authority of that Court on my Side; which, from their sufferings under the Government of that Tribe of Men, have enough provided that it shall never be so governed so again, by excluding all Religious Men for many Years out of the Conclave. And though the same Authority that hath of late provided that the Popes shall be always chosen out of the Cardinals (which hath had frequent Interruption) hath likewise provided that there shall be always at least four Religious Men in the College of the Cardinals, it hath never been observed near these last Hundred Years; for most part of which Time there hath not been one, and rarely two Religious Men in the whole Body. Nor is there any Reason to reproach that Court with what they do not in any degree affect, with being given to Contemplation, when from Boys of Sixteen they are bred the most to Action, and the least to Contemplation, of any Court in the World; where they least look into Books, and most converse with Men, and have nothing of Ecclesiastical but their Habit, and the first Tonsure, which makes them capable of many Preferments which they may part with, and with their Qualification, and any Obligation from it, when they meet with a better Invitation. But let us take a View of those Men, who in former Ages, from very private and scholastick Education, have

come to great Eminency of Place and Employment; and we shall then discover how much of their Qualifications had its Original from Education: not to take any Advantage from their Pope *Celestine*, who for his Sanctity was sent for out of his Cell, and crowned Pope; and for his extreme Want of Understanding and ordinary Discretion, was within Six Weeks perswaded to give over his Place that he could not manage.

There cannot be Three Men named, who from the meanest Birth and low Breeding, grew to so great Fame and Lustre, and made themselves more illustrious, than our Cardinal *Wolfey*, Cardinal *Ximenes* in *Spain*, both which lived together, and *Sixtus Quintus*, who was afterwards Pope, and who was born whilst the other two lived. The first of these was the Son of a poor Butcher; who sent him indeed to the University, but was so far from being able to maintain him there, that he was compelled to leave it, and to be contented to keep a poor School in the Country, which is no contemplative Life, and was near Thirty Years of Age before he was taken Notice of; yet grew afterwards, by a Succession of Employments, to be esteemed of great Industry and Vivacity, which seldom go together; and from thence to as great a Height of worldly Glory, as a Subject is capable of. But nothing of this was owing to his Contemplation, but the pure Effect of his Activity and Conversation in the greatest Courts of *Christendom*, and with the Persons of the greatest Princes, by whom he was received into great Familiarity and Trust; and if he had not been accompanied with two very great Vices, from the Poverty and Lowness of his Birth, the one of Pride, and the other of Pusillanimity, he might have been as glorious in his Death as he was in his Life: But an exorbitant Pride grew up with him, as it is most natural to those of the meanest Extraction, to so unheard-of a degree, that he made all the great Nobility of the Kingdom his mortal Enemies, upon Contests which had no Relation to Religion; and then his Pusillanimity was in truth his Death, when all the Indignation of the King could not have taken his Life from him; but his poor Spirit, that had been so immoderately blown up with his Prosperity, expired, at being reduced to live in a lower Orb: whereas he might have raised a nobler Monument of his Virtue in his magnanimous Behaviour in his Misfortunes, than he hath left behind him in his Palace at *Westminster*, and his College of *Christ-Church* in *Oxford*. The second, who had at least as obscure an Original, and in some Respects made a more glorious Progress in the World, and died of the same dispirited Disease, Cardinal *Ximenes*, was the Son of a poor Smith, thrown into a Monastery of *Franciscan* Fryars, who charitably took care of his Education according to the woful Rules and Constitutions of their Founder. However, in a Kingdom where good Cloaths nor good Looks contribute nothing to Advancement, he found Means to make himself known and grateful to the greatest Prince at that Time in *Europe*, and of the greatest Sagacity, and the highest Dissimulation, that any Age hath brought out; and under this Prince this Fryar grew to be a Cardinal, and which is better, Archbishop of *Toledo*, and did many the most magnanimous Actions which can be performed by the greatest Subject; for besides the building many noble Palaces, which he left to that mighty Archbishoprick, and besides the Princely Structure of his College and Monastery, which upon the Matter contains the whole University of *Alcala*; for all the Publick Schools and all the Professors are of his Foundation in his College, all the other Colleges not being to be named with many of our Halls; he raised at his own Charges (to vindicate the Honour of his Nation, for all Indignities, Contumelies and Calamities,

it had for so many Hundred Years undergone by the *Moors*) an Army, provided Ships for their Transportation, and conducted them himself in the Expedition, invaded the Neighbour Part of *Africa*, defeated an Army of the *Moors*, and took the City of *Oran*; which, with some other Places he left and annexed to the Crown of *Spain*, they possess to this Day. This Man indeed knew little more of the Transactions of the World, than he learned in the Court of his own Master and by his Instructions, the great *Ferdinando*; who being at the Age of Eighteen Years married to the Heiress and Queen of *Castile*, was seldom after named without her till after her Death: And indeed the World had not a Stage upon which more or greater Business was acted, than the Court of that Prince; who was the Founder of the *Spanish* Monarchy, left the Kingdoms of *Naples* and *Sicily* annexed to it, and the Title to all that in *Italy* which hath been since possessed by *Spain*; nor was there a Court in the World where the Affairs of all other Courts were so much transacted as in this. Under this King was this Fryar educated; the Meanness of whose Extraction cannot be concluded from the mean Profession of his Father; for if he were an *Hidalgo*, (a Gentleman,) as many Smiths and Men of lower Professions are known to be, he would not have married the Daughter of the richest Merchant in *Spain*. But let his Birth be what it will, and his first Studies in the Monastery be contracted and restrained within never so narrow a Compass, he lay not long buried there; nor is it probable that he addicted himself much to Contemplation there, but had very active Thoughts towards the World, for he grew quickly eminent in all the Posts through which he passed, from the Schools to the Pulpit, and from thence to the Council and the greatest Administrations of State, under a Prince that understood and practised all the good and the bad Arts of Government; was an excellent Dispenser of Justice, and a most devout Professor of Religion, when he could with most Ease mount by those Stairs; and could as well make use of the most profound Dissimulation, and the most bare-faced Perjury, when he found those Practices would contribute to his Designs: And when he had promoted this well-instructed and well-exercised Fryar to be a Prince of the Church, and found him enough acquainted with all the Science of Government, he committed at his Death the greatest Part of the Managery of it, which he conducted with unquestioned Abilities; and if his Evening had not discredited his Works of the Day, in sinking under the Discountenance, rather than the Displeasure of *Charles* the Fifth, upon his first Entrance into *Spain*; for the Emperor sent only a less Compliment to him than he expected, which broke his Heart within two Days; he had remained to Posterity a lasting Monument of the great Abilities and Virtues which naturally accompany and are the proper Fruits of an active Life, but could never be applied to the Advancement of a contemplative One. And how little the first Part of his Breeding in the Monastery contributed to his rare Abilities, did the more manifestly appear, by the Person whom the same Emperor near the same Time caused to be made a Cardinal, and assigned him to the same Part of the Government in *Spain*, his Tutor *Adrian*; who had been born of as obscure Parents, and in a worse Climate, and bred in a better University, and by him after promoted to be Pope; who remained still the same Pedant, and understood the World no more that he was to govern, than the rest of his Kindred that remained at *Utrecht* pretended to do.

The last of the Three, and he was last in Time, was *Sixtus Quintus*; of whose Original no more is known, than that he kept Pigs near a Village where he was born; and might properly enough be said to be promoted by Chance, (though there was Providence in it) when he was accidentally called to shew the Way to another Fryar; who, upon Conference liking the Spirit of the Boy, commended him to the Charity of a neighbour Monastery of *Franciscans*; where, by the Quickness of his Parts and an indefatigable Industry, in a short time he made himself eminent in those Studies which are taken Notice of amongst that People: but even from that Time was least notorious for his Delight in Contemplation; for he was always of a proud and an imperious Nature, solicitous for Preferment, and Offices which might intitle him to command others, without paying any Obedience to those Superiors who were to command him; and by this impetuous Disposition he rendred himself very ungracious, and uneasy to most of the Convents in his own Order; yet by his confess'd Learning and Eloquence in Disputation as well as Preaching, he found Friends to advance him, not only to the highest Offices of his Order, as Provincial and General; Offices as incapable of Contemplation, or as much Strangers to it as the greatest Conductors of Armies, or the most active Admirals upon the Ocean pretend to be; but to the degree of a Cardinal, after he had been in the most active Offices with three Nuncio's in *Spain*, who all came afterwards to be Popes, and one of which promoted him to the Cardinalate. From this Time it is true, and never before, he betook himself to a contemplative Life, that is, to the Contemplation how he might come to be Pope; he changed entirely the whole course, fashion and manner of his Life; he retired to a little House and good Garden that he had bought, and seldom went out either to the Court or to the Consistory. From being rough and insolent in Conversation, he became the meekest and the humblest to all Men; and from affecting Business, which he understood very well, he withdrew himself from having any part in it, and took great Pains to be thought utterly decayed in his Intellectuals, and in truth to be thought incapable of it. So that for many Years before he came to be Pope, he was notorious for nothing, but for what all other Men avoided to be taken Notice of, that he lived not in the State of a Cardinal, that he understood nothing of their Affairs, nor loved to speak of them; nor was he ever mentioned for any thing that was commendable, but for his Excess of Courtesy to all Men, and his customary Charity, which made him beloved only among that sort of People that could do him no good. Upon the Death of *Gregory XIII.* when the Cardinals entred into the Conclave, there were many who had never seen *Montalto*, (*Sixtus Quintus*;) he had been much spoken of Ten or a Dozen Years before, but was now forgotten under that negligent Retreat: In the Conclave he seldom came out of his Cell, except to the Chappel; and then with so much Weakness, that except supported by some other help than his Staff, every Man suspected he would fall down. He could never be induced to enter into Discourse of the Business of the Conclave, which he protested he understood not; but was full of Humility to all, and offered his Vote to every Man who he thought probable to go out Pope. After a very long and a factious Conclave, the two Cardinals who were the Heads of the contrary Factions, and had struggled on the behalf of their Creatures to no purpose, met one Day accidentally near the Cell of Cardinal *Montalto*, and agreed for Divertisement to make him a Visit, that is, to make themselves merry with him. When they came in, they told him that they came to make him Pope:

He

He smiling, told them in a feeble Voice, that if they did, they Two must do all the Business, for he was sure he would do nothing but say his Office, and think of the Way to Heaven: And from this Hour both these Cardinals, who agreed in nothing else, upon the Presumption that he would die in a short time, and that they should govern him whilst he lived, wholly intended the making him Pope, and brought it to pass within Two or Three Days, though no Man had fewer Friends, or more Enemies; and in this manner he came to be *Sixtus Quintus*. And from that Time he made it appear, that he had thought very much, too much for Contemplation, and quickly undeceived those who hoped to govern him; all his Faculties were renewed to their old Vigour; he talked of Kings and Princes, as of his Vassals, who for their Miscarriages might be questioned and punished by him; and made it manifest, that he understood the greatest Secrets of their own several Courts, and the greatest Intrigues in their Councils; by which he exacted a greater Reverence from them all than any of them had a mind to pay him. In a word, never any Man more absolutely commanded in any Province, or suffered any Man to command less who was under him; and if he had ever spent any of his Time in Contemplation, he made such haste to get out of it, that it was manifest that his whole Delight was in Action, and that he was never out of it but against his Will; which naturally produces a very unequal and untoward Temper for Contemplation.

We have not hitherto found such a Definition of a contemplative Life, a Life addicted only to Contemplation, that doth promise, or is like to produce such Fruit, as gives the most solid Delight and Joy to the Mind or Soul of Man, or enables him to serve God better, or his Country as well, as the more busie and active Man can do; nor such an Example of a meer contemplating Man, who by his Actions hath raised the Reputation of it to such a Lustre, as may invite a Man of Virtue, and of publick Thoughts, to devote himself unto it. But there is, I confess, a Classis of Men, who I believe are depended upon by the others to come in to their Aid, tho' without any Reason, being more properly called quiet than contemplative Men; Men, who upon a short and perfunctory Survey of the ill Humours and ill Natures of Mankind, it may be from some Observation of want of Ingenuity that attends a Flood or Crowd of Business, or it may be from some Stupidity or Pride in their own Natures, that renders them more unapt as well as unfit for that Society and Conversation which an active Life requires, retire quickly from the Stage, where publick Businesses are most acted, decline all ambitious Pretences in the Court, all Desires of publick domestick or foreign Employments, and betake themselves to a quiet undisturb'd Condition of Life in the Country, in the Managery of their own Fortunes, or in the Divertisements of lawful Sports and Recreations, or in the Exercise of their own Thoughts and domestick Agitations; and after a great Part of their Life spent in this negligent and neglected Course of Life, are by some Accident or Choice called out again into the World, to the Discharge of some great Office or Employment, which they do with that wonderful Ability, as if they had been always travelling in that Tract; and of these Men there are infinite Examples to be found in all Kingdoms and Provinces. There are so, and will always be so; but they are no more applicable to the Determination of this Controversy, between the Excellence and Benefit from a contemplative or active Life, than they are towards resolving whether a Man can enjoy a better Health in the Court than in the Country. There is no more Activity in the Court than there is in

in the Country, nor more of Contemplation in the Country than in the Court; both Spheres are equal for the Practice of both: Nor is Action or Contemplation confined to any Place, or to any Quality or Degree of Persons; they may dispose themselves to which they please, and in what Place they please, the Question being only, whether the disposing themselves to either, be like to contribute more to the Service of God, to the Benefit of their Country, and to their own Salvation; which are the three peculiar Ends of Man's Creation, and ought all with equal Industry to be intended, and no Place excludes either: tho' it may be Colleges and the Country may give more natural Nourishment to Contemplation, than the Court and the Camp can naturally administer; but towards an active Life, neither of them contributes more or better Materials than the Country, where the best and the most exact Survey is taken of the Nature of Man, because they are least disguised; what brings most and best Advantages to the Publick, and what most contradicts or destroys it, is most effectually discovered; the Errors in Policy itself, tho' too often mistaken, and too unskilfully and superciliously censured and reproached, are first taken Notice of, and proper Remedies foreseen in those Climates. So that they who prescribe the Knowledge and Conversation in Courts (how useful so ever) to be the only Conductors towards an active Life, may as reasonably pretend that a Man cannot be as good a Mariner by making a Voyage to the *East-Indies* in a Merchant-Ship, as if he had made it in a Vessel belonging to the Royal Navy. In a Word, we are so far from giving up the Country to the contemplative Man, or for the Exercise of Contemplation, that we are ready to pronounce, that the most active Condition of Life, as a good Statesman or a good Courtier, must draw the principal Ingredients of his Wisdom from the Knowledge and understanding of the Country, which is the Constitution of the Government, and the Nature and Disposition of the People, as it is at present, and as it may be brought to be by the Application of those Arts and Remedies, which will easily convince them what is good for themselves, which is the true End and the only lasting Support of all Government.

We have prosecuted our Inquisition into a contemplative Life, what is meant by it, and what it cannot mean, what Fruit it may bear, and what Fruit it can never bear, far enough; and therefore, it is time to proceed to as strict an Enquiry into the Nature and Function of that active Life that we would have preferred before it; of which we can hardly take a View, without frequent Reflections upon the Defects which are inseparable from the other, and the Benefits that must necessarily attend or accompany this. The first and the greatest Objection that is made against it, is the perpetual Temptations it exposes a Man to, and the great Difficulty to preserve Innocence in the Pursuit of a busy and solicitous Life; that the Industry of it is commonly founded upon Ambition, which, how proud and insolent soever it is in its own Nature, stoops to the basest Offices, to the most sordid Applications of Flattery, to the grossest and most uningenuous Importunities of the most worthless Men, if they are able to contribute to his Preferment. If Activity be not transported with this Vice, which by the way may be industrious and innocent too, and is naturally rather a Spur to virtuous Designs, than an Incitation to low and vile Thoughts, it is still subservient to some other as corrupt an End; it proceeds from Covetousness, a Love of Money, and Desire to be rich; which is a Passion of that unlimited and insatiable Extent, that it devours all that is in its Way, and yields to all dishonourable Condescensions that it may devour, and is al-

ways unrestrained from any Prescription of Decency and Generosity, or by the most severe Rules of Justice itself. Should this restless Inclination to Action take up its Habitation in a Mind so rarely fortified by the Principles of Virtue, that it cannot be corrupted by those predominant Passions which work upon vulgar Constitutions; whose Ambition is to be great for no other Reason, than that he may be able to make other Men good, and to suppress the infectious Vices of the Age; who hath no other Appetite of Money, than that he may dispose it to charitable and generous Purposes; it will still be liable, even from the Contagion of the Company from which it cannot be severed, to Impressions of Vanity and Levity and Inco-
 gitancy, which usher the Way to other Temptations, at least introduces an Inquietude into a Mind well prepared against more violent Invasions. And if a Man under all these Assaults, and in all these Conflicts, remains unhurt, retains the Vigour and Beauty of his Integrity, which will be no less than a miraculous Preservation in this Pursuit; it is yet much more than an even Wager, that the very Fame and Reputation of his Virtue and Innocence may raise such a Storm of Envy and Malice in the Breasts of unrighteous Men, as may oppress him in the noblest Attempt, and utterly destroy him in the safest Port, and leave his good Name and Memory torn with as many ghastly Wounds, as his Body or his Fortune: To which shall be only added, that History or Experience hath transmitted the Memory of very few Men to us, who have been notoriously prosperous in the Transactions of the World, and long possessed that Station, whose Characters have not retained the mention of some extraordinary Vice or Infirmary, as well as of many notable Virtues; as if those strong Flights could not be made without the Assistance of some Iniquity. Whereas the contemplative Life is secure from all those or the like Waves and Billows; that Retreat enjoys a perpetual Calm; the contemplative Man is never disturb'd with Ambition, because he knows not what it is, otherwise than in Books, which hath supplied him with Antidotes against that Poyson; he is superior to any Temptation from the Love of Money, because he needs it not, nor knows what to do with it if he had it: He hath in the dark Volumes of Philosophers made a Discovery of that Heap of Passions and Appetites, which lie in wait to assault human Nature in all the several Functions of Life and Insults of Fortune; and when he discerns the strong Opposition made, and the glorious Conquests obtained by those Heathen Philosophers, by the mere Supplies which Reason and their natural Faculties suggested to them, he then considers what other Advantages he hath from Christianity, which enables him at once to despise and laugh at the Provocations, without any Exaltation in the Triumph.

Let this Privation of Understanding go for Wisdom, and this stupid Absence of Guilt stand for Uprightness, yet it complies not with the Obligation and End of the Creation of Man; who is not sent into the World only to have a Being, to breathe till Nature extinguisheth that Breath, and reduces that miserable Creature to the Nothing he was before: He is sent upon an Errand, and to do the Business of Life; he hath Faculties given him to judge between Good and Evil, to cherish and foment the first Motions he feels towards the one, and to subdue the first Temptations to the other; he hath not acted his Part in doing no Harm; his Duty is not only to do Good and to be Innocent himself, but to propagate Virtue, and to make others better than they would otherwise be. Indeed, an Absence of Folly is the first hopeful Prologue towards the obtaining Wisdom; yet he shall never be wise who knows not what Folly is, nor, it may be, commendably

bly and judiciously honest, without having taken some View of the Quarters of Iniquity: since true Virtue pre-supposeth an Election, a declining somewhat that is ill, as well as the Choice of what is good. Our Senses are given us to judge by, and have their proper Objects, which they are the sole Judges of; nor is it lawful to imprison those Senses, that they may not be conversant with their Objects, nor to abate their Edge, and extinguish the Acuteness, which is the Perfection of them, lest their Objects, how natural and proper soever, may have some Operation upon them to their Prejudice: A Man may hear too much, and see more than he hath a Mind to see; but no Man ever saw too well, or heard too well; and no Sense was ever reformed by being deprived of its Object, from the Malignity whereof he hath other Guards and Remedies to secure him. A Man would deserve little Comfort in this World, or in the World that is to come, who would chuse to be blind, that he may be without those Strugglings which some beautiful Objects may raise or kindle within him; when a chaste Eye hath a Brightness about it, that dispels and disperses those Rays which would dazzle and perplex it: and the unnatural Attempt to extinguish a Sense or Passion, rather than to subdue it, is usually rewarded by the Prevalence of a grosser Temptation; and the Lasciviousness that could not get Entrance at the Eye, makes a Breach into the Ear in loose and effeminate Tunes, and kindles and fans all those Desires into a Flame, that the nobler Sense would have resisted. To be without Wishes, or without Appetite, is the Property of a Carcase, not of a Man; who is not more a reasonable, than an active Creature; whose first Testimony that he hath a Soul, is the Noise he makes; and there cannot be a worse Omen in the Birth of any Child, than its Silence; and it were to be wished, that those Instances only might condemn People to a contemplative Life, into which Silence is the principal Ingredient, and should be taken for the best Prognostick. The World is a Field, in which Man is to learn and to labour to be wise and to be valiant, that he may have Foresight and Courage enough to encounter and subdue Temptations, not to hope to fly from them; at least not to fly out of the Field, or farther than to recover Breath to renew and continue the Contention: They who prescribe Famine to correct the Luxury of the Appetite, and Opening all the Veins in the Body to subdue the Lusts of the Flesh, have found a Remedy that God never thought of, and for the Cure whereof Nature hath laid in a Stock of Temperance and Moderation, if it be carefully applied. It is a vulgar Error, and is most produced and nourished in vulgar Minds, that a Man can shut himself up from approaching any Vice, or shut out any Vice from approaching him, except he shut himself up in the Grave; that Struggle and Contention must last as long as the World lasts, let the Scene lie where it will; and he who basely declines the Campaign, that he may lie concealed and secure in a Garrison Town, meets with the same or greater Dangers from the Sickness, Disease and Mutinies, which naturally accompany those Retreats, than he would have encounter'd in the thickest Vollies of the Field; and may properly enough be compared to that wary People, who, conscious to themselves of that want of Courage and Resolution that is necessary to resist the Devil, and to make him fly from them, chuse rather to fly from him, and hide themselves in Monasteries and Places of Solitude; and make Vows of Silence, that he may take no Advantage of their Words; and that they may be chaste, besides their Vows, avoid the Company of all Women; and vow Poverty, that they may be without Ambition: Whereas the Devil is commonly too hard for them in those dull Speculations, and suggests Thoughts to them as full of Wicked-

Wickedness, as the worst Actions can be; and infuses a Drowsiness and Sottishness into their Souls, a Stupidity and Lethargy into their Understandings, that is more dangerous and pernicious to their Bodies and their Souls, than all their Wanderings in the World could probably have proved.

The busy and industrious Man hath still the Light about him, his Vices and his Virtues are equally conspicuous; and it is no small or ineffectual Provocation to the Amendment of Life, to find that his Manners are taken Notice of by all Men, and condemned by most; which is a wholesome Mortification: His Wisdom and his Piety make a greater and a better Noise, and shine brightly in the View and to the Benefit and Information of good Men, who delight to dress themselves in his Glass, and transcribe his Manners into their own. He doth not only plant and cultivate the Principles of Industry, Magnanimity, and all heroical Virtues in the Minds of Men, but mends and improves the Soil where they should grow, by gentle and civil Cautions and Animadversions; and he very often lives to see the Harvest and very good Fruits gathered from his Husbandry, to the great Benefit of the Church and State. He reads Lectures, and gets Children after he is dead by the Propagation of his Principles and his Counsels, and the Communication of his Actions, and in the Justice that is paid to his Memory. If these Flowers grow in the Garden of Contemplation, they are of the Nature of those Flowers which prosper only in the Night, and disappear and close their Leaves at the Rising of the Sun. We have very little Testimony, very few Records, of any notable Fruit gathered from this dry Tree of Solitude; that their Counsels have contributed much to that Wisdom, which is necessary for the virtuous Conduct of the Affairs of this World; and the Speculations which some of those pious Men have produced towards our Journey to the next, a wise Preparation for which is the most necessary Business of this Life; without the least Purpose to undervalue the Pains they have taken, and for which they deserve great thanks, we may say, that even in that Exercise, and to the Purposes they design, the Prescriptions for living well and profitably for our selves and others, and of dying well for our own Salvation and the Example of others, the clear Resolutions of weighty Doubts, and the Folly of those Doubts which arise from the Impotence of the Understanding; the Advice and Determinations which we have received from the Piety and Industry of those who have been very conversant in the World, and much intangled in the Affairs and Transactions thereof, have another kind of Sap and Nourishment, carry in them another kind of Conviction of the Understanding, and find another kind of Irresistibleness from the Affections and from the Will, than the laboured Conceptions of those Collegiate and Monastick Persons; from whom we may as reasonably expect to receive the News of the Court, as the most refined Notions of any Science; which can only spring, as to Use and Application, from frequent Experience and solid Observation, and from finding our selves often deceived; which is a Part of Learning the other Classis of Men are very rarely versed in.

It cannot be denied, that they who are embarked in the Agitations of the World, obliged to attend and be present in the Throngs and Crowds of Courts, to sustain the Burthens of great Offices and Employments, or the Envy and Murmurs of being without them, or seeing other Men possess'd of them, who they think are in Merit inferior to themselves; which make them complain of the Justice of Princes, and of the Providence of God himself: I say, these Men, and all who would be in the Rank of these Men, who have a wider Prospect of Good and Evil, see the pleasant

Baits

Baits and Temptations, and the grosser Traps and Gins that are laid to catch and surprize the several Affections and Appetites of idle and dissolute Men; and therefore probably more of them may be seized upon and corrupted by such Allurements, than can be debauched in Cloisters and Inclosures, which are without such Prospects. But it is a very great Error to conclude from hence, that this Exorbitancy in their Inclinations, this Depravedness of their Judgment, or Corruption of their Manners with what Vice soever, is the Product of that Course of Life which they have addicted themselves to: Whereas the Course of Life they have chosen is innocent and honourable, and only can be effectually prosecuted by excellent, at least well qualified Persons; and the Vices which commonly first or last make them unsuccessful in it, proceed from the Corruption and Wickedness in their own Nature, and which would break out with equal Venom in any Condition of Life or in any Profession; the Malignity is in the Man, brought with him, not found by him in the Air in which he lives. He who is of licentious Manners in a Court, would with less Cleanliness practise the like or as bad Excesses in a Convent; and he who is corrupt upon the Bench, and receives Bribes in Cases of Judicatory, would be as dishonest if he were a Fryar: He would corrupt Women in his Chair of Confession; and give Absolution in the greatest Crimes, that he might be instructed in the most secret Practices and Mysteries of Iniquity: If he be a Great Man, and inclined to Rebellion, had he been a Monk, he would have become an Heretick, and disturbed the Peace of his Country with those Uproars. And on the other side, that poor *Capuchin*, who without Shoes or Shirt, and upon less Meat than Nature and Health requires for its Sustentation, contracts and directs all his Thoughts to the Glory of God, and to the Enquiry into the Joys of Heaven; and in a Conversation so remote from Understanding, and in Quarters so sterile and barren of all Knowledge, can preserve any moderate Vigour of Spirit by the Variety of his own Devotions; this Man, upon his being in better Company, and his Observation of the Thoughts and Actions of Men, and his Discovery of the vast Distance that is usually between them, would arrive at such a piercing Faculty, that no enormous Sin should find a lurking Place in the darkest Breast, to conceal itself from him: he would possess himself of the Hearts of Princes, by the Force and Violence of his attractive Reason and Virtue, and would raise such Monuments and erect such Land-Marks for Piety and Devotion, that would convince and reform the World together. So great a Difference there is between the Influence and Inspiration of the Sun in that Sphere where it moves so powerfully upon noble and active Employments, and the twinkling Light of the Moon-shine that hath a faint Influence upon Groves and Cloisters.

It is time now to drive this Discourse to that Point, that can only put an End to it; that is, the true and exact Consideration of God's Purpose and Expectation from and in his Creation of Man, as far as he hath communicated it to us himself: which may be, and usually is, reduced to three short Heads, though either of them may be extended into great Variety of Reflections. (1.) For his own Service. (2.) For the Benefit of the World and Good of Mankind. (3.) For the Salvation of our own Souls; which is rather our Duty from our Creation, than the Cause of it; and both the last depend upon the well discharging the first Obligation. And from the View of every one of them in Order, we shall be best able to judge which Condition and Designation of our Lives is most like to comply with his Purpose and Expectation, and to enable us to bear that Fruit that is necessary with refer-

rence to all the Particulars. To begin then with what relates to God's Service; and a Man may as reasonably believe that he can dress himself as well in the Night as in the Day, when it is dark as when it is light; as that he can be enabled to do it as well without Counsel and without Conversation, as by the most pious Motives and the brightest Examples that can be given by the uprightest and most devout Man. There is no Prison so streight and narrow, in which the poorest Man may not serve God very effectually, and it may be the more effectually, from the Misery of his Restraint; but he that would chuse to be cast, or cast himself into a loathsome Prison, upon the Presumption that he should serve God there with the more Fervour, would very probably think least of him, and spend his Time more in Murmurs than in Sighs. Too many, who know enough of him, endeavour little to please him, and were more happy if they knew less; yet there is no Question, that he who knows most of him, knows best how to serve him, and is most inexcusable if he doth not. He who in the great Variety of Spectacles, and of the several Actions and Designs of Men of all Tempers and Inclinations, cannot but more observe the Footsteps of God's Providence, and the Contradictions of that Providence by wilful and affected Tergiversations, must consequently know his own Duty better than the poor Artificer, who is confined to his proper Work that he may get Bread, and is without those Visions, and could not make the same Observations if he had them; nor can it be more doubted, that God expects another kind of Account from the first than from the last. The Man who is well instructed by his Experience, and the Improvement of his Faculties, doth not only know better how to comply with his own Obligations in doing all Things that may please him, how uneasy soever it is to him, and in declining all Things that will displease him, how pleasant and grateful soever those Particulars would have been to his own Desires and Affections; but knows likewise that God hath communicated that Knowledge, and increased that Understanding, that he may instruct and reform other Men, who are without those immediate Assistances; that he hath given him a Cure of Souls, a Diocese to govern: and all the good Operations which his Informations and Example hath upon the Manners and the Lives of other Men, are so many Services to God himself, a Regiment or an Army raised at his own particular Charge for the heavenly Militia. It is no easy thing to conceive what Contribution of this kind your retired Men can bring in for his Service: they pretend not to instruct others, whose Company and Conversation they chuse to abjure or avoid; and after a short Solitude, grow to that Sottishness of Understanding, as to make an Acquaintance with Birds and Beasts, and to affect their Company till they have taught them to perform many Offices of Life, and it is well if they escape the working of Miracles. It is true, they assume to themselves, or others attribute to them, a wonderful Prerogative of Prayer; the Importunity and Merit whereof, they would have it believed, doth contribute to the Salvation of many active Souls, which bear a little Part towards it for themselves: Whereas it will require some Charity to believe, that they understand enough of the Nature of Prayer, or of the very Existence of God himself, to make their Devotions prevalent for their own Salvation; since there are as many Difficulties to be overcome towards the right Service of God, and as many Knots to be untied in the Knowledge of him, as in any other Science; which rude and unpolish'd Understandings cannot comprehend; and it is an unpardonable Presumption, not to call it worse, to imagine that

that the Prayers of those who pretend to no other Merit, than by denying to do somewhat that God gave them leave, and made it lawful for them to have done, should have Force to draw down more Blessings from Heaven than will serve their own Turn. Many, very many Instances are not wanting of extraordinary Men, who, satiated with the Transactions of the World, have withdrawn themselves from the Stage of Action, to a quiet and industrious Retirement; in which, by Reflections upon what they have seen and done, the wonderful Successes which could not be foreseen, and the great Misfortunes that could not be prevented, they have raised such Instructions for the attaining all kind of Wisdom, that, if Industry and Advertency be not wanting, the Journey is much shortened that leads to all Degrees of Happiness, by their Travels, to all that follow them: But we are yet to seek for any one notable Example of a Man, who having spent the first Part of his Life in Solitude, and hath no other Knowledge of God, of himself, and of other Men, than he hath drawn out of the Bowels of his own Speculation; and hath after, upon or from that drowsy Contemplation, raised a Stock of Discretion and Ability to enter upon the Government and Conduct of any Publick Affairs, upon what Exigent soever he be called thereunto, with any tolerable Advantage. When the Pope found it necessary to command the Duke of *Joyeuse*, for the Glory of God, to put off the Habit of a *Capuchin*; and commanded him, under the Penalty of Sin, to undertake the Conduct of a rebellious Army against his own natural King, and absolved or dispensed with all those Oaths and Vows which he had made, and which were first to be removed; the poor *Capuchin* became not thereby so inspired in the Art of War, though the holy Father sent him a Sword of his own Blessing for the surer Execution, as to obtain any Victory upon his Enemies: but gave Occasion to *Henry* the Fourth to observe, that the Pope had spoiled a good *Capuchin*, to make the worst General in the World. When those vigorous Spirits are first mortified and moped with the absurd Documents of Contemplation, before they know any thing to contemplate upon, they can never be revived out of that dull and lazy Lethargy, to be applied to any magnanimous Activity.

The next Consideration is, for the Benefit of the World, and Good of Mankind: In which the Disquisition will be extended little farther, than whether a Man who lives in the World is able to confer more and greater Benefits upon it, than he who lives out of it; whether he who converses freely amongst Men be more like to do them good, to instruct and inform them what they are to do, than he who converses solely amongst Walls and Trees. What reverend Esteem soever we are bound to have of the wonderful Creation of the whole World, and of the most excellent Part of that Creation, in the Beauty and Glory of Man, both in Body and Soul; yet we are no more obliged to believe that he created Man with all that Sharpness of Understanding, and Faculties of Judging, with which he hath since endued him, than we are to think that the Garden of *Eden* was cultivated with as much Curiosity, as any hath been since in *Italy* or *France*; if *Adam* were so qualified, he quickly lost it; and we have as old Records of the Folly of Mankind, as of their Wickedness; and the greatest Part of the World is yet inhabited by Men as Savage as the Beasts who inhabit with them; and there is no Nation that hath not elder Records of their Barbarity, than of the Knowledge and Manners with which they are now delighted. As God created Man out of the Earth, so he committed the Earth to Man to be by him cultivated and polished, and made fitter for his Residence;

Residence; and though he did sometimes, and for some extraordinary Administration of his Service, vouchsafe to instruct some particular Men, and to enlighten their Understanding by his own Inspiration, this was but rarely, and to some wonderful Purpose. The common Method he used was, to leave Mankind to prosecute their own Happiness, and to attain to it by their mutual Industry, and improving each others Faculties; and they who therein made the greatest Progress by the very Dictates of Nature, received the Esteem and Reverence of those who have grosser Understandings. God hath done his Part when he hath made us capable of helping our selves, and infused Reason into us to repair to others, when we cannot help our selves; and to what Nation soever he hath been most bountiful in the Communication of his Graces, there are even there many more to learn than there are to teach. So that Learning and Knowledge which produces Wisdom, is the natural Effect of Mens Industry, and Men are indebted to each other for all the Advantages they have over each other; and they deserve much more from Mankind, who by their Care and Kindness conduct them to be wise, than they do who build Hospitals for Fools. No Charity is comparable to the Charity of Instruction and of seasonable Reprehension, and none can distribute this Charity but wise Men; and every Man how wealthy soever, is a proper Object of this Charity. If a Man will be so perverse, as to despise and hate Instruction, and chuse rather to give himself up to the Torrent of his own Appetite, than to the Conduct of his own Reason, or the Precepts of an honest Man, he is diverted or reduced by the Power and Authority of the Magistrate; so that Man is still the Instrument that administers Information, Consolation or Chastisement to other Men, whereby they are either made wise, preserved innocent, or corrected for not being so; and whosoever doth exercise those Functions effectually, doth God and his King and his Country great Service; and they who can do neither, must be thought to live to less purpose and to deserve less regard. Before Heaven or Hell were preached or thought of, lazy and unactive Men were in Contempt with all Men; and they who were busy and industrious, and thereby brought Fruit into the World, had the general Applause and Estimation; and we may warrantably believe, that Idolatry was first brought into the World by the Distinction of Mens Qualities and Virtues, when Men of transcendant Parts, and who delighted in doing good, got the Reputation of Deities, and shortly after their Death became adored as such: when the ordinary and common sort of Men were considered but as Brutes, and lived to as little purpose. All that is pleasant and beautiful and useful upon the Earth, the Cities and Gardens, the Palaces and Churches, which are the Ornaments of the Earth, and exceeded only by God's own Architecture in Heaven, are from the Bounty and Contrivance, and upon the Matter from the very Handy-work of great and magnanimous Persons, who understood and were active in the Affairs and Transactions of the World, and acted their Parts in them; and to that Spirit only, and to God's Blessing, which is always upon it, and cherishes and directs it, we owe our dwelling in Houses, our living cleanly, our being clothed, and the Civility of our Manners, which distinguishes us from the naked painted Bodies and the rude Behaviour of our Ancestors, with Rings and such coarse Ornaments for their Ears, Cheeks and Noses; and whoever doth not think that Religion it self hath received great Benefit from those Cultivations and by the Improvement of all Sciences, and that it hath been thereby redeemed from many Deformities and Impurities, with which by the unpolished Manners

Manners of the Professors of it, it was disfigured and discredited, doth more dote upon the wrinkled Face of Antiquity than he hath cause to do; and if Antiquity it self be in truth so instructive and lovely, it will be much more knowing and more amiable in the last Scene, judge better in the Evening, when one Day hath told another, and one Night hath certified another of all that it hath seen or heard, than they who scarce out-lived the Morning; and by this Computation we may be thought older than our Forefathers, and having observed more, may contribute somewhat to that they could not know so well: and to this Augmentation your Tribe of contemplative Men can bring in little Contribution.

We are come now to the last Survey; what Condition of Life is like best to assist us towards the attaining our own Salvation; which is our first and our last Work, and which if we cannot obtain, it had been much better for us that we had never been born. God forbid, that every honest Man, how unactive soever, who means well, and is no otherwise guilty than of not being able to do all the good he desires to do, should not be in a State and assured Hope of Salvation; yet Salvation being comprehended within a Palace of the noblest and the largest Extent that the Imagination of Man can conceive, and where there is room for as many as shall be admitted, we may lawfully believe, as the whole Christian Church did for the Space of Fifteen Hundred Years, though some learned Men have since disclaimed that Opinion, that there are several Degrees of Happiness in that Station of Beatitude: And then it is more than probable, that they who have been more signal and more successful in doing well themselves, and in perswading and instructing others to do so too, shall receive greater Rewards, than they who have only performed their own Task, though they have thereby procured a Reception for themselves. If there be in that House of Eternity many Mansions, it is but congruous to believe that they shall have the best Places in Heaven, who have been the best Men upon Earth, and whose Precepts and Examples have sent and carried most Souls thither. It is true, we know little of the State and Condition of Angels and Saints, and have too much reason to fear that too many have mistaken their Way thither, who have procured some Testimony that they are there; yet we know that there are Arch-Angels, who are of a Class superior to the other, and have Employments and Trusts committed to them accordingly. The Prayers of a devout General while upon his Knees, and when his Army is fighting, may procure Victory for that Army, without his contributing more to it; yet because Men pray and fight together, Princes have rarely rewarded, at least not equally, the Piety of such a General, as they have done the Courage of inferior Officers: And we may lawfully believe, without doing our selves any Harm, or him any Dishonour, that God doth observe that Method. There is a Rivalship in Virtue, that provokes a holy Ambition; and it would do little less Mischief in the World, if Men were generally taught to believe, that the most vehement Pursuit of Obedience to all God's Commandments, and the prevailing upon the Affections of other Men to do the same, doth not improve the State of that Man above his, who hath only forborn maliciously to transgress any of them, than the too common Opinion, that whatsoever a Man doth or leaves undone, his Lot will still fall out to be the same. Kings and Princes, as such, can make no Claim of Precedence in Heaven; nay, they are in Danger of having many Sins of Commission and Omission laid to their Charges, which shall not be objected to inferior Delinquents: yet good Kings and Princes, who have expelled and banished all Uncleannefs and Profaneness out of their

Courts, and thereby prepared the Hearts of their Servants for the Reception of that Awe and Reverence for God Almighty, that will make them tremble to offend him; who govern their Subjects with that Candour and Affection, as they do their Children; and with that fatherly Rigour, that compels them to do their Duties, when they have no mind to be innocent; such Princes and Great Men shall have a Precedence in Heaven itself: and it is a Joy worthy of that Region, to see a Train sent thither by their Directions, or come thither by following their Example; and it will well become Persons of that exalted Condition, to prepare such an Equipage for their last Journey, both for their Harbingers and Retinue, by which they would travel at less Charge, and enjoy Rest with more Ease. There cannot be a worse Character given of an Emperor, or of a Gentleman, than *Tacitus* gives of *Galba*, *Ipsi medium ingenium, magis extra vitia, quam cum virtutibus*: He scarce lives a sensitive Life, (for Trees naturally grow and improve themselves, and bring Benefit to their Owners, Plants flourish, and Seeds produce Profit to those that sow them) who only lives, and doth no Good; and he is not so rational as he ought to be, that so lives to himself, and for himself, that he labours not to do good to others. I am not sure that the Son of *Syrach* was not then thinking of our fullen contemplative Man, when he says, *There is one that laboureth and taketh Pains, and maketh haste, and is so much the more behind*. It is not the Pains a Man takes, but the Skill he hath in doing the Work, which merits the Wages. Meer Labourers earn little; and a blind Man who is shut up in a great Room, may take great Pains, and labour himself to weariness, and yet not be able to find the Door.

They who seem to believe that all Souls are alike; that the Soul in the wisest Man and in the greatest Scholar is no more disposed to Wisdom and Learning, than the Soul that is infused into a Fool and the most illiterate Person; do yet confess, that it is polished by Education and Conversation, to that Perfection, that it produces those Effects which distinguish the wise from the foolish, and makes all other Distinctions between the several Faculties of Mankind; which is enough to oblige us to give so precious an Inmate and Companion, that can make us so good a Recompence, the best Entertainment we can; to allow it the best Diet, and prescribe it the best Exercise, that may nourish it to that Vigour, as may make us gracious to God and Man. Whether its Virtue proceeds from its own Original, or whether it be purely from our Contribution, it is the same to us; for what Perfection is in our own Power to attain unto, is a Debt due to ourselves, which we are in Conscience bound to pay; and he who will not do all he can to make himself wise, highly deserves to undergo the Fortune and the Fate of a Fool; and he is literally *felo de se*, who deprives and robs himself of that which no body but himself can rob him of; nor need he require any other Evidence than his own, to know whether he hath paid this Debt, whether he hath done all to mend this Soul of his that he ought to have done. If he finds some Inclinations in it to do well, or no Importunities or Aversions from it; and knows that no Industry, Cogitation, or Reflection of his hath contributed to those Motions; he may conclude, that it is not a Soul of his own making, but that it owes all its Virtue to its own Original, and would have had as much Influence upon a silly Girl, as it hath had upon him: But if he finds that, upon his Deliberation and Application, it hath recovered more Strength and Vigour; that upon his Cogitations and Reflections, it is not only ready to give an Assent, but suggests new Conceptions to him to advance any noble Designs; he may then conclude,

clude, that it is in his own Power to extend it farther; and that by a good Diet, and proper Exercise, it may be instrumental to bring notable Things to pass, for the Service of God, for the Good of his Country, and for his own and the Salvation of other Men. The Wisdom of a learned Man comes by Opportunity of Leisure. That is true; when there is Wisdom and Learning, they will both grow, and be improved by the Opportunity of Leisure; but neither Wisdom or Learning will be ever got by doing nothing. He that hath little Business shall become wise, but he that hath none, shall remain a Fool; he that doth not think at all upon what he is to do, will never do any thing well; and he who doth nothing but think, had as good do nothing at all. The Mind that is unexercised, that takes not the Air, that it may know the Minds of other Men, contracts the same Aches and Cramps in the Faculties of the Understanding, that the Body labours with by the want of exercising its Limbs; and he that resolves to sit still, can never come to the End of his Journey by other Men's running never so fast. There is Evidence, by the Observation and Experience of every Man, enough to convince him of the great Advantages which attend upon an active Life, above what waits upon pure Contemplation; that there is a great Difference between the Abilities of that Man who hath contracted himself to any one Study, tho' he excels in it, and him who hath with much less Labour attain'd to a general experimental Knowledge of Things and Persons; and so the greatest Divine who hath read all the School-men, and all the Fathers, and is as wise as most of them were, will be sooner deceived in the Market, and pay more for his Cloaths and for his Meat, than his Groom will do, who understands that and his Horse too. A good Proportion of universal Knowledge is requisite to judge of that which seems to be most particular, especially if it refers to any thing that is to be done, because Men ought to foresee and provide against all things which may possibly cross the Enterprize, as well as prepare all things which may probably make it succeed. Very great Attempts, and very well deliberated, have miscarried and been disappointed, by the Incompetency of the Persons to act those Parts to which they were assigned; and who undertook the same willingly, because they believed themselves to be very competent for the Execution. And so *Machiavel* observes, it was an absurd Inadvertency in those who conspired the Assassination of *Julius*, and *Lorenzo de Medicis*, in the Church, presuming that they would come and sit together, and so provided three Men very equal to the Undertaking; two of them being Gentlemen of known Valour and Resolution, and of implacable Malice to the Persons and to the Family of the *Medicis*, and the third a Priest of great Strength, and Wickedness enough to undertake, and Courage to execute what he undertook: But the two Brothers not coming together, and the Article of Time for the Execution being agreed upon to be in the Moment of the Elevation, the Conspirators were compelled to divide the Work, and to design the Priest to dispatch *Lorenzo*, who was first come, and sat near the Altar in a Crowd of Persons of Honour, without the least Apprehension of Danger, and committed the Slaughter of the other to the two resolute Persons. *Julius* came later to the Church, and was in the Embraces of the one, when he was struck into the Heart with a Dagger by the other; whereby all three falling together, and multiplying their Strokes, not knowing that there was enough done before, one of them struck his Dagger through his own Thigh; and yet by the Confusion and Consternation the People were in, they both got out of the Church, and left *Julius* dead upon the Place. The Priest was not less intent upon his Work, nor less resolved to perform

perform it, and in the precise Minute of that holy Exercise, assaulted *Lorenzo* with his undiscerned and unsuspected Dagger, and struck him into the Throat; but though he reiterated his Strokes, either by the Posture that he himself or the other was in, or by not directing his Blows to the most mortal Places, *Lorenzo* made some Defence with his Hands, and after with his Sword, till with the Help of others he got into the Sacristy, and barricadoed the Door, till he found that the Conspirators were employed rather to save their own Lives, than to prosecute his; and so he retired to his House to take care of his Wounds. *Machiavel* observes, that the Miscarriage of this Enterprize, was the Effect of the Unaptness of the Priest to be relied upon in such an Affair; for tho' he was expert enough in many other sorts of Villany, he had not been often enough conversant in Assassination, and so was more disturbed or discomposed in the Execution of it, than an expert Man would have been. Without doubt, all Counsels, good or bad, do depend for the pursuance thereof upon so many Circumstances, that there ought to be at least as much Circumspection in the Choice of proper Instruments to conduct them, as in all the other Deliberations.

Having now prosecuted this Subject at least far enough, and it may be said some Things over and over; and that I may not be thought an Enemy to Contemplation, without which no great Action was ever well and warrantably performed; I am willing to find a Classis of Men, whose Virtues grow out of, and consequently may be divided between the active and the contemplative Life, and so give great Perfection to both. My Exception only is against those, who fancy that a Mind utterly uninformed and unexperienced, shall, by being dedicated to Retirement and Privacy, by that Repose and Contemplation, not only preserve a greater Innocence, but attain to a greater Perfection for the Performance of those Duties which are incumbent on us. Which I must always deny; and cannot conceive that Thinking to any Purpose is a Fruit that grows out of Solitude, but rather that it may be well called a Faculty that is attained with great Difficulty; and the Want of which is the Fountain and Source from whence the most, if not the greatest Inconveniencies flow in the Actions of Mankind; which methinks should appear very credible upon the Observation of all Men who hear the Excuses which are every Day made, and truly made, by those who do amiss, that they did not think of it; and it is a real Disease that infects the Bodies, and ruins the Estates of more Men than all the Fevers which usually reign: And yet that kind of Thinking, though it might prevent many of the Follies which happen, would not be enough to constitute that Wisdom of which we are discoursing. The Wise Man that should reform and establish Governments, without exposing them to apparent Hazards and Dangers, who would at the same time have an Influence upon the Spirits of Princes, and compose the Minds of the People, and produce a Conformity in the Obedience of the One to the Wishes of the Other, and bring all such other Things to pass, from whence Men come to be reputed wise and fortunate, must compound his Life both out of Action and Contemplation; and they must as it were succeed each other, *alternis vicibus*. If a Man who hath been well versed in the Conduct of Affairs, and the Nature of Men, would voluntarily quit the Stage, and retire to a Condition of chearful Contemplation; and if he who hath conversed with few but with himself, or with others at that Distance, that he may be said rather to know their Names than the Men, but is abundantly stocked with the best Observations out of the best Books, would retire from his Retirement, and first make himself acquainted with Men, and then with Bu-
siness

finest by degrees; for there may be more poured in together than the Vessel can receive and retain, which all Men find who do not come *gradatim*, but *per saltum* to Employment; either of such Men would be fit to stand in a Breach that threatens the Ruin of a Nation; would stand upon a Precipice without stirring, and by his convincing Reasons subdue the Passions, and reform the Irregularities of the most forward and insolent Persons, when from such a Recess, and after such an Advance, they return to their former Station. But, as I said before, this must be a voluntary Recess, that may carry with it that Serenity of Mind, that is fit to revolve all he hath done, and all that he hath seen done; and thereupon make such Reflections impartially, that he may discern where the Faults or Oversights were, and thereby conclude what may with more Discretion be done, or left undone upon the like Occasion. If this Recess be constrained by the Envy and Power of an Adversary, and so the Man be looked upon as under a Disgrace, and compelled to do that which he could not avoid the doing of, it will be a very difficult thing to preserve that Tranquility of Mind which is necessary to the Integrity of such Cogitations and Reflections: but he will rather call to Mind the Faults of other Men than his own; and out of Prejudice to the Persons of others, not remember what he did amiss himself: Or if he be not so much oppressed with the Mortification, but that he doth with Ingenuity recollect his own Errors, and think no worse of others than he ought to do; yet the Effect it usually produces is rather a Disinclination, an Abhorrence of future Activity, and a Resolution never more to embark himself in any Employment, to which the Disobligations and Indignities which are seldom wanting in those Seasons to such Persons, contribute very much. Whereas if this Vacation be really chosen and affected, it carries with it a wonderful Refreshment of the Mind, and is so far from raising an Aversion to the former Course of Life, that it is more like to whet the Appetite; and the Imagination and Conscience of being wiser than he was before, and not liable to those Passions which he hath subdued, may even provoke him to be very willing to submit his Neck to the same Yoke; and having still preserved his Reputation, other Men are more glad after some Years absence to see him tread the Stage again, and have more Reverence for his Dictates, than they would have for a new Comer, exalted from being inferior, it may be from being their Enemy, to the same Condition with them.

The Reason why we have in an Age so few Examples of the Improvement of Men by that Method, I mean in Monarchies; for in Republicks somewhat is very like it, where an inferior Officer this Year is superior the next, and so the other in Vicissitude; but if it be examined, it will be found very different, and justly to be excepted against in Monarchy, the Difference and Distinction of Persons, being one of the chief Pillars that support it, as the Equality of Persons doth the other Government; nor is it possible for any great Officer, who hath thereby extraordinary, and but necessary Power to serve a Prince, to assume and exercise that Authority with Confidence and Courage, who knows he can be possessed of it but for a Year, and all other People know so too: I say, there are two Reasons which keep us from much Experience of this kind; the one, that Men in Place and Authority, who by an active Life have arrived to that Station, and still retain the Vigour and Strength of Body and Mind, or believe they do so, rarely have an Inclination to give over their Employment; the other, when they have done so, and find themselves at Ease in their Fortune, without which there can be no Repose, they grow to reflect upon the Rocks and the Shelves upon which they

they have been near shipwreck'd in their former Voyage, and of which they then took little Notice, and from thence contract an Aversion to venture themselves again to Sea. For the former of these, except they are in a declining Age, Men seldom think that they have need of a Recess, and that they shall improve their Understanding by it; they find the very Practice and Exercise they are obliged to in the Road of their Employment, doth every Day add to their Abilities, as no doubt it doth: nor can it be imagined, that Men in that Condition of Life, are without much Contemplation and Revolvings of what they do or hear; but that is not that kind of Contemplation I propose towards their better Information. It is an Observation that good Fellows make, that a Quarter of the Wine will keep a Man drunk that first made him so, notwithstanding the Sleeps he takes between; because the first Fumes being still kept in Motion, the Moisture of the Brain cannot resist the Operation, till it hath recovered its original Temper and Solidity: So it is in Business, which produces a kind of Intoxication, or a Tumult in the Faculties of the Mind; it is not the ordinary Sleep that Nature requires, or those calm Reflections which wise Men cannot be without, nor the short Recreations and Vacations which are always allowed to the most busy Men, that can enough refresh a Person worn out or tired with the constant Transactions of difficult and knotty Employments; the Brain will retain a Warmth, and the Mind some Agitation from the continued Motions, which can never be allayed but by such a Recess as makes all Rooms vacant, and without so much as an Imagination of future Activity: and such a kind of Retreat as this is very hard to be disposed unto; the Importunity of Friends will dissuade it as perilous to the Constitution, and like to impair Health, and so shorten Life; Servants will resist it for their own sake, yet upon Pretences of Affection to their Masters; at least the deferring it cannot be without some such Convenience as will be hearkened unto; but above all, the Apprehension of being less regarded by other Men, and exposed to the Insolence of those who may be thereby encouraged to enter into Expostulations for past Discourtesies, do at last prevail to continue in that Post, from which he might very honourably have departed, till by some Accidents, he might but did not foresee, he is thrown out of it with Obloquy and Disgrace, and so exposed to the worst of those Indignities, for avoiding whereof he declined the only Remedy. Without doubt, the voluntary Departure from, and intire Change of a Condition of Life in which a Man hath been long delighted, without having Cause to be displeased with it, cannot but meet with great Reluctancy, except it proceeds from a virtuous Habit of Mind, and a total withdrawing the Thoughts from this World and affixing them for the future upon Eternity; and yet they may by the Benefit of much Cogitation and the Conscience of being able to do good, which hath always a great Operation upon the Spirit of a good Man, innocently return to the Acting a new Part in the World: which, if his Faculties remain the same they were, he will perform with a wonderful Lustre and Sufficiency, and much the more from the Benefit of the Rest he hath given him, and having been purely divested from all the Thoughts which could perplex him, and so arriving to that Serenity of Mind that is then the natural Product of a wise and learned Contemplation.

For the other sort of Men, who have prevailed with themselves to make this Retreat, and find themselves in Possession of it, it is much more natural to adhere obstinately to it, and to have a peremptory Aversion to embark themselves in that Ocean, than it was to desire to be on Shore. Let

no Man doubt, that there is so transcendent a Joy and Delight in that well chosen and well instructed Solitude, wherein he enjoys a second Fruition of whatsoever was agreeable to him in the active Part of his Life, without the Fatigue it cost him, by a sober Recollection, that he can more easily part with Life it self than with the Solitariness of it; in which he is without any melancholy Reflections, except such as administer Vivacity to his Understanding by the Information and Reformation of it. He recalls to his remembrance the Frowns and Imperiousness of his Superiors towards him, or his own Condescensions to divert them; and then triumphs in the Liberty and Principality he enjoys in his own House, without a Rival or Competitor. He is as active as he was before, with less Trouble of Body and Mind, and finds new Pleasures in the Place of those with which he was before enough fatiated; a Garden and a Park supplies him with greater Variety and more innocent Divertisement, than the City and the Court used to do. He was hitherto so much perplexed with what related to the Publick, that he had never a full Joy in his own Domesticks, nor those a sufficient Protection and Providence from him: Now he is in Possession of the Company and Conversation of his own Wife, which he seldom had before; he is acquainted with his own Children, who were before Strangers to him, and whom he makes wise by his Instruction; he keeps no more servants than he employs, and obliges them to be pious and dutiful; he regulates his Expences by what he hath, and not by what he hopes to have; and if he finds his Fortune to be more narrow than he could wish, he presently retrenches those Wishes; and then he finds likewise, that to have little and not to care for much, yields the same Comfort and Satisfaction. In a word, he enjoys all the Pleasures within himself that he would wish for, and the same Delights that *Dioclesian* had in his Garden, which were greater than he had enjoyed in the Government of the World, when he had administered it eighteen Years, and which he would not depart from, to be restored to the Possession of. What Arguments can have strength and Force enough to draw an honest and prudent Man from this so near an Approach to Heaven, into the Storms and Tempests of this World, and to resign all that Tranquility to the rude Contentions of the Court? There cannot be imagined any Attractive powerful enough in such a Case, but the absolute Injunction and Command of the Supreme Authority; which an honest conscientious Man can hardly resist, and the doing whereof would deprive him of much of that Felicity, for the Preservation whereof he hath presumed to be disobedient. And it may be, if Princes did sometimes exercise this high Point of Sovereignty, by compelling Men who have been very conspicuous in Action, to come again into the Light out of this beloved Retreat, their Affairs might be much improved by it, and many hasty and precipitate Resolutions be prevented, by the sage Advice and Observation of such as are known to have had great Experience. And by this means the bringing such Revolutions into Request and Practice, the former Classis of Men might be the oftener induced to dismiss their Business before they are dismiss'd; and most of those Considerations which terrify them from it, would make little Impression upon them, when they are not only discouraged to make any barbarous Attempt upon the Reputation of a Person who hath left a good Fame of his Actions, but discern that it is probable that they may again see him in the same or a greater Administration.

To conclude this Disquisition, we shall only add, that there may be one Circumstance that hath not been yet mentioned, and which may worthily have

have as great an Influence upon sober Men, in their Election to what Course of Life they will dedicate their Studies, as any Inclination or Impulsion from their own Natures; and that is, the Temper of the Time, the Age, and the Climate in which they live, for there are *vitia temporum*, as well as *vitia hominum*. There may be such a Current and Torrent of Vice of the Climate, that a Man of Modesty and Virtue is not only too weak to withstand it, but even to be overwhelmed by it, and involved in the Infamy of it, tho' not the Guilt; there may be such a Levity and Vanity intoxicate the most active Part of the People, or those to whom the Conduct of most Action is intrusted, that the Sobriety of Advice may not only not be hearkned to, but the Person who gives it rendered so ridiculous, that he can never after become useful. The Rashness and Precipitations of Counsels may be such, the Inadvertencies in those Accidents which may probably fall out to disappoint the Success, and the Unsteadiness and Irresolution in prosecuting the Ways agreed on, that wary Men may reasonably be unwilling to bear a Part in them, which are liable to so much Reproach, and the Issue thereof so discernable; but above all, the Principles of Religion and Justice may be so little insisted upon and observed in the Counsels, and the Power of weak and wilful and wicked Persons so predominant, that all wise Animadversions are ingrateful, ineffectual, and render the Authors of them at the Mercy of those who do not approve them: In all these Cases, and some other, Men do think themselves excusable, if they avoid and fly all the Occasions and Opportunities that may carry them into such infectious Company, and engage them in such infamous Transactions; and chuse rather to sleep in the most dark and obscure Cells, and to be buried in perpetual Silence and Oblivion, than to be taken Notice of, when such unwarrantable Things are done and countenanced, tho' themselves are not only innocent, but known or believed to be so. There is an Agony and Torment that a generous and worthy Person undergoes, by hearing dissolute and prophane Discourses, and by the Sight of impious and scandalous Actions, which inflict a more sensible Pain than can be express'd; and it may be is greater than can result from any Wound in the Flesh or Fracture in the Bone; yet after all these Discouragements it may be reasonably thought that a Man of Virtue and Magnanimity had better engage himself in this pestilent Air than fly from it; there never was Contagion so venomous that destroyed all that were near it, and the Survivors are commonly looked upon as Men born to some more than ordinary Purpose. He cannot be absolved in Point of Duty to his Country, who because it is invaded by a triumphant Army, will not lift himself for its Defence; and when the Safety of a Nation is more threatned from within than from without, from being deceived by unfaithful and undiscerning Counsellors, than from the Strength and Power of a Foreign Enemy, he is very inexcusable that will not do all he can to discover and prevent the Mischief, with what Hazard soever to himself. Princes may be as easily deceived by those they trust, as other Men can be; nay, they may, by the Operation of some predominant Passion or Appetite, conspire with others to deceive themselves, but they can never be willing to be undone; and how late soever they discern their Ruin that approaches, and how they have been couzen'd and betrayed by the Promoters of it; if by the former withdrawing of good Men, they then shall be without that Assistance which is necessary to their Preservation, those Withdrawers are liable to a fouler Reproach, at least an equal to those who have been first in the Conspiracy.

There

There is another Argument of Interest and Safety, that may rather induce worthy Men and of active Spirits, even in the worst Conjunctions, to place themselves as near the Stage as they can, than to withdraw to a dark and quiet Retreat till the ruining Tempest be over. In the first he moves in his proper Sphere, where, if it be his Fate, he perishes more decently, than he can avoid it: Besides, no Man can tell how far the particular and remarkable Virtue and Discretion of a single Man can contribute in some Article of Time towards the Reformation of a general Disorder; there being naturally such a Prerogative in doing well, that puts Guilt out of countenance when it is most prevalent; and the worst Men are often found not to be so bad as they were thought to be, and are weary of their Follies, and desire to undo the Mischief they have done. If it proves to be otherwise, and that Iniquity prospers in its Rage and Obstinacy, the retired Man is in as much Danger in his Vault, as the most active is upon the Stage; and we shall find as many who were assassinated in the Time of *Cinna, Sylla and Marius*, as likewise in that of the Triumvirate, of those, who, by absenting and concealing themselves, thought to have escaped the general Miliary, as of those who walked the Streets. In those black Seasons, Men are more obnoxious by their Virtues than in their ordinary Persons: *He is grievous unto us even to behold, for his Life is not like other Mens, his Ways are of another Fashion*, was Charge enough in *Solomon's* Time, and hath continued ever since to be so. Since then no Providence of our own can direct us to make Choice of our Condition of Life, that may not be subject to many Infelicities, we shall do most wisely so to dispose of ourselves, that if it be possible our Lives may be useful and beneficial to the Publick, or our Deaths comfortable to ourselves.

Of W A R.

MONTPELLIER, 1670.

AS the Plague in the Body drives all Persons away but such who live by it, Searchers, and those who are to bury the Corps, who are as ready to strangle those who do not die soon enough, as to bury them; and they who recover are very long tired with the Malignity, and remain longer deserted by their Neighbours and Friends out of fear of Infection; so War in a State makes all Men abandon it, but those who are to live by the Blood of it, and who have the pillaging of the living as well as of the dead; and if it recover, and the War be extinguished, there remains such a Weakness and Paleness, so many ghastly Marks of the Distemper, that Men remain long frightened from their old Familiarity, from the Confidence they formerly had of their own Security, and of the Justice of that State, the War leaving still an ill Odour behind it, and much Infection in the Nature and Manners of those who are delighted with it. Of all the Punishments and Judgments that the provoked Anger of the Divine Providence can pour out upon a Nation full of Transgressions, there is none so terrible and destroying as that of War. *David* knew he did wisely, when he preferred and chose the Plague before either of the other Judgments that he was to undergo for numbering the People, though it cost him no less than Seventy Thousand Subjects; so vast a Number, that three Months Progress of the most victorious and triumphant Enemy could hardly have consumed; and the one had been as much the Hand of the Lord as the

other, and could as easily have been restrained, or bound by his Power: The Arrow of Pestilence was shot out of his own Bow, and did all its Execution, without making the Pride or Malice of Man instrumental in it; the Insolence whereof is a great Aggravation of any Judgment that is laid upon us, and Health is restored in the same Moment the Contagion ceaseth; whereas in War, the Confidence and the Courage which a victorious Army contracts by notable Successes, and the Dejection of Spirit and the Consternation which a subdued Party undergoes by frequent Defeats, is not at an end when the War is determined, but hath its Effects very long after; and the Tenderness of Nature, and the Integrity of Manners, which are driven away, or powerfully discountenanced by the Corruption of War, are not quickly recovered; but instead thereof a Roughness, Jealousy and Distrust introduced, that makes Conversation unpleasant and uneasy; and the Weeds which grow up in the shortest War, can hardly be pulled up and extirpated without a long and unsuspected Peace. When God pleases to send this heavy Calamity upon us, we cannot avoid it: but why we should be solicitous to embark our selves in this leaky Vessel; why our own Anger, and Ambition, and Emulation, should engage us in unreasonable and unjust Wars; nay, why without any of these Provocations we should be disposed to run to War, and *periclitari periculi causa*, will require better Reason to justify us, than most that are concerned in it are furnished with. *Fugulantur homines ne nihil agatur*, was the Complaint and Amazement of a Philosopher, who knew of none of those Restraints which Christianity hath laid upon Mankind. That Men should kill one another for want of somewhat else to do (which is the Case of all Volunteers in War) seems to be so horrible to Humanity, that there needs no Divinity to controul it. It was a Divine Contemplation of the same Philosopher, that when Providence had so well provided for, and secured the Peace between Nations, by putting the Sea between, that it might not be in their Power to be ill Neighbours, Mankind should be so mad as to devise Shipping, to affect Death so much, *sine spe Sepulturae*; and when they are safe on Land, to commit themselves to the Waves and the fierce Winds, *quorum felicitas est ad bella perferri*; and that those Winds which God had created, *ad custodiendam Caeli terrarumque temperiem*, and to cherish the Fruits and the Trees of the Earth, should be made use of so contrary to his Intentions, *ut legiones, equitemque gestarent*, and bring People (whom he had placed at that Distance) together, to imbrue their Hands in each others Blood: Indeed it must be a very savage Appetite, that engages Men to take so much Pains, and to run so many and great Hazards, only to be cruel to those whom they are able to oppress.

They who allow no War at all to be lawful, have consulted both Nature and Religion much better, than they who think it may be entred into to comply with the Ambition, Covetousness, or Revenge of the greatest Princes and Monarchs upon Earth: As if God had only inhibited single Murders, and left Mankind to be massacred according to the Humour and Appetite of unjust and unreasonable Men, of what Degree or Quality soever. They who think it most unlawful, know well that Force may be repelled with Force; and that no Man makes War, who doth only defend what is his own from an Attempt of Violence: He who kills another that he may not be killed himself by him who attempts it, is not guilty of Murder by the Law of God or Man. And truly, they who are the Cause and Authors of any War, that can justly and safely be avoided, have great Reason to fear, that they shall be accountable before the supreme Judge,

for

for all the Rapine and Devastation, all the Ruin and Damage, as well as the Blood, that is the Consequence of that War. War is a Licence to kill and slay all those who inhabit that Land, which is therefore called the Enemies; because he who makes the War hath a Mind to possess it: And must there not many of the Laws of God, as well as of Man, be cancelled and abolished, before a Man can honestly execute or take such a Licence? What have the poor Inhabitants of that Land done, that they must be destroyed for cultivating their own Land, in the Country where they were born? And can any King believe, that the Names of those are left out of the Records of God's Creation, and that the Injuries done to them shall not be considered? War is a Depopulation, defaces all that Art and Industry hath produced, destroys all Plantations, burns Churches and Palaces, and mingles them in the same Ashes with the Cottages of the Peasant and the Labourer; it distinguishes not of Age, or Sex, or Dignity, but exposes all Things and Persons, sacred and prophane, to the same Contempt and Confusion; and reduces all that blessed Order and Harmony, which hath been the Product of Peace and Religion, into the Chaos it was first in; as if it would contend with the Almighty in uncreating what he so wonderfully created, and since polished. And is it not a most detestable Thing, to open a Gap to let this wild Boar enter into the Garden of Christians, and to make all this Havock and Devastation in Countries planted and watered by the equal Redeemer of Mankind. and whose Ears are open to the Complaints of the meanest Person who is oppressed? It is no Answer to say, that this universal Suffering, and even the Desolation that attends it, are the inevitable Consequences and Events of War, how warrantably soever entred into: but rather an Argument, that no War can be warrantably entred into, that may produce such intolerable Mischiefs; at least if the Ground be not notoriously just and necessary, and like to introduce as much Benefit to the World, as Damage and Inconvenience to a Part of it; and as much Care taken as is possible, to suppress that Rage and Licence, which is the wanton Cause of half the Destruction.

It may be, upon a strict Survey and Disquisition into the Elements and Injunctions of Christian Religion, no War will be found justifiable, but as it is the Process that the Law of Nature allows and prescribes for Justice sake, to compel those to abstain from doing Wrong, or to repair the Wrong they have done, who can by no other Way be induced to do either: As when one Sovereign Prince doth an Injury to another, or suffers his Subjects to do it without Controul or Punishment; in either of which Cases, the injured Prince in his own Right, or the Rights of his Subjects, is to demand Justice from the other, and to endeavour to obtain it by all the peaceable Means that can be used; and then if there be an absolute Refusal to give Satisfaction, or such a Delay, as in the Inconvenience amounts to a Refusal, there is no Remedy left, but the last Process, which is Force; since nothing can be in it self more odious, or more against the Nature and Institution of Sovereign Power, than to do Wrong, and to refuse to administer Justice; and therefore, the Mischiefs which attend, and which cannot but fall upon the Persons and Fortunes of those who are least guilty of the Injury and Injustice, because the Damage can very hardly reach the Prince, but in his Subjects, will be by the Supreme Judge cast upon his Account who is the original Cause and Author of the first Transgression. And if it be very difficult to find any other just Cause to warrant so savage a Proceeding as all War produces, what can we think of most of that

that War which for some hundred of Years has infested the Christian World, so much to the dishonour of Christianity, and in which the Lives of more Men have been lost, than might have served to have driven Infidelity out of the World, and to have peopled all those Parts which yet remain without Inhabitants? Can we believe that all those Lives are forgotten, and that no Account shall be rendred of them? If the saving the Life of any single Person who is in danger to perish, hath much of Merit in it, though it be a Duty incumbent to Humanity; with what detestation and horror must we look upon those, who upon Deliberation are solicitous to bring Millions of Men together to no other Purpose than to kill and destroy; and they who survive, are conducted as soon as may be to another Butchery, to another Opportunity to kill more Men, whom they know not, and with whom they are not so much as angry. The *Grammarians* have too much Reason to derive *bellum, a belluis*; all War hath much of the Beast in it; *immane quiddam & belluarum simile*; very much of the Man must be put off, that there may be enough of the Beast: Princes must be obeyed, and because they may have just Cause of War, their Subjects must obey and serve them in it, without taking upon them to examine whether it be just or no, *Servi tua est conditio ratio ad te nihil*; they have no Liberty to doubt when their Duty is clear to obey: but where there is none of that Obligation, it is wonderful, and an unnatural Appetite that disposes Men to be Soldiers, that they may know how to live, as if the understanding the Advantage how to kill most Men together were a commendable Science to raise their Fortune; and what Reputation soever it may have in Politicks, it can have none in Religion, to say, that the Art and Conduct of a Soldier, is not infused by Nature, but by Study, Experience and Observation; and therefore that Men are to learn it, in order to serve their own Prince and Country, which may be assaulted and invaded by a skilful Enemy, and hardly defended by ignorant and unskilful Officers: when in truth, the Man who conscientiously weighs this common Argument, will find that it is made by Appetite to excuse, and not by Reason to support an ill Custom; since the Guilt contracted by shedding the Blood of one single innocent Man, is too dear a Price to pay for all the Skill that is to be learned in that devouring Profession; and that all the Science that is necessary for a just Defence may be attained without contracting a Guilt, which is like to make the Defence the more difficult. And we have Instances enough of the most brave and effectual Defences made upon the Advantage of Innocence, against the boldest, skilful and injurious Aggressor, whose Guilt often makes his Understanding too weak to go through an unjust Attempt, against a resolute though less experienced Defender.

It must seem strange to any one, who considers that Christian Religion, that is founded upon Love and Charity and Humility, should not only not extinguish this unruly Appetite to War, but make the Prosecution of it the more fierce and cruel; there having scarce been so much Rage and Inhumanity practised in any War, as in that between Christians. The ancient *Romans*, who for some Ages arrived to the greatest Perfection in the Observation of the Obligations of Honour, Justice and Humanity, of all Men who had no Light from Religion, instituted a particular Triumph for those their Generals who returned with Victory without the Slaughter of Men. It were to be wished, that the modern Christian *Romans* were endued with the same blessed Spirit, and that they believed that the Voice of Blood is loud and importunate; they would not then think it their Office and Duty

Duty, so far to kindle this Firebrand, War, and to nourish all Occasions to inflame it, as to obstruct and divert all Overtures of extinguishing it; and to curse and excommunicate all those who shall consent or submit to such Overtures, when they are wearied, tired, and even consumed with weltring in each others Blood, and have scarce Blood enough left to give them Strength to enjoy the Blessings of Peace. What can be more unmerciful, more unworthy of the Title of Christians, than such an Aversion from stopping those Issues of Blood, and from binding up those Wounds which have been bleeding so long? And yet we have seen those inhuman Bulls let loose by two Popes, who would be thought to have the sole Power committed to them by Christ, to inform the World of his Will and Pleasure; the one against the Peace of *Germany*, and the other against that with the *Low-Countries*; by both which, these his Vicars General absolve all Men from observing it, though they are bound by their Oaths never to swerve from it. We may piously believe, that all the Princes of the World, who have wantonly, or without just and manifest Provocation, obliged their Subjects to serve them in a War, by which Millions of Men have been exposed to Slaughter, Fire and Famine, will sooner find Remission of all the other Sins they have committed, than for that obstinate Outrage against the Life of Man, and the Murders which have been committed by their Authority.

Of P E A C E.

MONTPELLIER, 1670.

IT was a very proper Answer to him who asked, Why any Man should be delighted with Beauty? that it was a Question that none but a blind Man could ask; since any beautiful Object doth so much attract the Sight of all Men, that it is in no Man's Power not to be pleased with it. Nor can any Aversion or Malignity towards the Object, irreconcile the Eyes from looking upon it: As a Man who hath an invenomed and mortal Hatred against another, who hath a most graceful and beautiful Person, cannot hinder his Eye from being delighted to behold that Person; though that Delight is far from going to the Heart; as no Man's Malice towards an excellent Musician, can keep his Ear from being pleased with his Musick. No Man can ask how or why Men come to be delighted with Peace, but he who is without Natural Bowels, who is deprived of all those Affections, which can only make Life pleasant to him. Peace is that Harmony in the State, that Health is in the Body. No Honour, no Profit, no Plenty can make him happy, who is sick with a Fever in his Blood, and with De- fluxions and Aches in his Joints and Bones; but Health restored gives a Relish to the other Blessings, and is very merry without them: No Kingdom can flourish or be at ease, in which there is no Peace; which only makes Men dwell at Home, and enjoy the Labour of their own Hands, and improve all the Advantages which the Air, and the Climate, and the Soil administers to them; and all which yield no Comfort, where there is no Peace. God himself reckons Health the greatest Blessing he can bestow upon Mankind, and Peace the greatest Comfort and Ornament he can confer upon States; which are a Multitude of Men gathered together. They who delight most in War, are so much ashamed of it, that they pretend, *Pacis gerere negotium*; to have no other End, to desire nothing but Peace, that their Heart is set upon nothing else. When *Cæsar* was engaging all

the World in War, he wrote to *Tully*, *Neque tutius, neque honestius reperies quidquam, quam ab omni contentione abesse*; there was nothing worthier of an honest Man than to have Contention with no Body. It was the highest Aggravation that the Prophet could find out in the Description of the greatest Wickedness, that *the Way of Peace they knew not*; and the greatest Punishment of all their Crookedness and Perverseness was, that *they should not know Peace*. A greater Curse cannot befall the most wicked Nation, than to be deprived of Peace. There is nothing of real and substantial Comfort in this World, but what is the Product of Peace; and whatsoever we may lawfully and innocently take Delight in, is the Fruit and Effect of Peace. The solemn Service of God, and performing our Duty to him in the Exercise of regular Devotion, which is the greatest Business of our Life, and in which we ought to take most Delight, is the Issue of Peace. War breaks all that Order, interrupts all that Devotion, and even extinguisheth all that Zeal, which Peace had kindled in us, lays waste the Dwelling-Place of God as well as of Man; and introduces and propagates Opinions and Practice, as much against Heaven as against Earth, and erects a Deity that delights in nothing but Cruelty and Blood. Are we pleased with the enlarged Commerce and Society of large and opulent Cities, or with the retired Pleasures of the Country? Do we love stately Palaces, and noble Houses, or take delight in pleasant Groves and Woods, or fruitful Gardens, which teach and instruct Nature to produce and bring forth more Fruits, and Flowers, and Plants, than her own Store can supply her with? All this we owe to Peace; and the Dissolution of this Peace disfigures all this Beauty, and in a short Time covers and buries all this Order and Delight in Ruin and Rubbish. Finally, Have we any Content, Satisfaction, and Joy, in the Conversation of each other, in the Knowledge and Understanding of those Arts and Sciences, which more adorn Mankind, than all those Buildings and Plantations do the Fields and Grounds on which they stand? Even this is the blessed Effect and Legacy of Peace; and War lays our Natures and Manners as waste as our Gardens and our Habitations; and we can as easily preserve the Beauty of the one, as the Integrity of the other, under the cursed Jurisdiction of Drums and Trumpets.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all Men, was one of the Primitive Injunctions of Christianity, *Rom. xii. 18.* and comprehends not only particular and private Men (though no doubt all gentle and peaceable Natures are most capable of Christian Precepts, and most affected with them) but Kings and Princes themselves. *St. Paul* knew well, that the peaceable Inclinations and Dispositions of Subjects could do little good, if the Sovereign Princes were disposed to War; but if they desire to live peaceably with their Neighbours, their Subjects cannot but be happy. And the Pleasure that God himself takes in that Temper, needs no other Manifestation, than the Promise our Saviour makes to those who contribute towards it, in his Sermon upon the Mount, *Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall be called the Children of God*, *Matt. v. 9.* Peace must needs be very acceptable to him, when the Instruments towards it are crowned with such a full Measure of Blessing; and it is no hard Matter to guess whose Children they are, who take all the Pains they can to deprive the World of Peace, and to subject it to the Rage and Fury and Desolation of War. If we had not the woful Experience of so many Hundred Years, we should hardly think it possible, that Men who pretend to embrace the Gospel of Peace, should be so unconcerned in the Obligation and

and Effects of it; and when God looks upon it as the greatest Blessing he can pour down upon the Heads of those who please him best, and observe his Commands; *I will give Peace in the Land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid*, Lev. xxvi. 6. that Men study nothing more than how to throw off and deprive themselves and others of this his precious Bounty; as if we were void of Natural Reason, as well as without the Elements of Religion: for Nature it self disposes us to a Love of Society, which cannot be preserved without Peace. A whole City on fire is a Spectacle full of Horror, but a whole Kingdom in Fire must be a Prospect much more terrible; and such is every Kingdom in War, where nothing flourishes but Rapine, Blood and Murder, and the Faces of all Men are pale and ghastly, out of the Sense of what they have done, or of what they have suffered, or are to endure. The Reverse of all this is Peace, which in a Moment extinguishes all that Fire, binds up all the Wounds, and restores to all Faces their natural Vivacity and Beauty. We cannot make a more lively Representation and Emblem to our selves of Hell, than by the View of a Kingdom in War; where there is nothing to be seen but Destruction and Fire, and the Discord it self is a great Part of the Torment: nor a more sensible Reflection upon the Joys of Heaven, than as it is all Quiet and Peace, and where nothing is to be discerned but Consent and Harmony, and what is amiable in all the Circumstances of it. And as far as we may warrantably judge of the Inhabitants of either Climate, they who love and cherish Discord among Men, and take delight in War, have large Mansions provided for them, in that Region of Faction and Disagreement; as we may presume, that they who set their Hearts upon Peace in this World, and labour to promote it in their several Stations amongst all Men, and who are Instruments to prevent the Breach of it amongst Princes and States, or to renew it when it is broken, have infallible Title to a Place and Mansion in Heaven; where there is only Peace in that Perfection, that all other Blessings are comprehended in it, and a Part of it.

Of SACRILEGE.

On a Fast-Day at JERSEY, 1641.

THE Original and Ground of the first Institution of Fasts and solemn Days of Humiliation, was to deprecate God's Judgment, and to remove some heavy Afflictions either actually brought upon or immediately threatened by him upon that People; and in order thereunto to make a faithful Inquisition into all Sins, and to enter into a Covenant against those which seem to be most cordially embraced by us, and consequently the most likely Causes of the present Calamities we groan under: So that though every Act of Devotion should raise in us a Detestation of all Sins whatsoever, yet as a particular Fast is commonly for the Removal of a particular Judgment, so the Devotion of that Day will not be too much circumscribed and limited, if it be intent upon the Inquisition into the Nature and Mischief of one particular Sin, and in the Endeavour to raise up some Fence and Fortification that that Sin may not break in upon us; especially if it be such a one, as either our own Inclinations, or the Iniquity and Temper of the Time in which we live, is like to invite us to. If the Business of our Fasts be only to inveigh and pray against the Sins we are least

least inclined to, we make them indeed Days of Triumph over other Men's Wickedness, not of Humiliation for our own; and arraign them, not prostrate our selves before God. If the Parliament's Fast-Days had been celebrated with a due and ingenuous Disquisition of the Nature and Odiousness of Hypocrisy, Rebellion and Prophaneness; instead of Discourses against Popery, Tyranny and Superstition; which though they are grievous Sins, were not yet the Sins of those Congregations; and if the Fast-Days observed by the King's Party had been spent in Prayer for, and sincere Study of Temperance, Justice, and Patience in Adversity, of the Practical Duties of a Christian, of the Obligations of Conscience to Constancy and Perseverance in our Duty, and of the Shame and Dishonesty and Impiety of redeeming our Fortunes or Lives with the Breach of our Conscience, instead of Arguments against taking up Arms against lawful Authority, Sedition and Schism; which, though they are enormous Crimes, were not yet the Crimes of those Congregations: both Parties without doubt would not have been as constant to their own Sins as to their Fasts; as if all their Devotions had been to confirm them in what they had done amiss, and in the end to shake Hands in the same Sins, and determine all further Dispute of Oaths, by a Union in Perjury, a general taking the Covenant, and to extinguish Rebellion by a universal Submission, and Guilt in Sacrilege.

I have not yet met with any Man so hardy, as to deny that Sacrilege is a Sin; or to aver that, being a Sin, a Man may be guilty of it for any worldly Consideration or Advantage whatsoever; and yet, as if there were no such Thing in Nature, or as if it were only a Term of Art to perplex Men in Debates, Men of all Tempers, and scarce reconcilable in any other Conclusion or Design, are very frankly and lovingly united in this Mystery of Iniquity: Which I cannot be so uncharitable as to believe proceeds from a vicious Habit of the Mind, but an Inadvertency and Incongruity of the Nature and Consequence of the Sin it self. It would not otherwise be, that a Thing that hath been so odious from the Beginning of the World amongst all brave Nations, who have been indued but with the Light of Nature, and have made any Pretence to Virtue, that they could not fix a Brand of more Infamy upon the most exorbitant Person in the Practice of all Vice, than to call him a sacrilegious Person, should be now held of so little Moment amongst Christians; and that when all Things dedicated and separated for holy Uses have been always accounted and reputed so sacred by Men of all Religions, or Pretenders to Religion, that where any Violation hath been offered to the Temples of any Gods, when a Country hath been pronounced to be destroyed with Fire and Sword, and all Cruelty practised by Order against all Ages and Sexes, the General of those Armies has, by his Sacrilege, lost the Reward of his other Conquests, and been punished with Infamy and Dishonour by those who have enjoyed the Benefit of his Victory, though they served not those Gods, or accounted them such whom he had spoiled: as we find frequent Examples in the *Roman* Story; who, besides that Justice upon those Accidents, celebrated some Devotions to absolve their State from the Guilt, and ordered Reparation and Restitution to be made to those Deities which had been robbed and prophaned; yet after Sixteen Hundred Years Study and Profession of Christianity, those horrible Crimes should pass by us, and we pass through them, not only without the least Compunction of Conscience, but without the least Blush or Apprehension of a Fault. *Will a Man rob God?* says the Prophet *Malachi*, ch. iii. 8. none will be so impudently wicked to say he will; yet ye have robbed me: but ye say, wherein have

have we robbed thee? in *Tithes and Offerings*, says the same Spirit. pretend what you will to Reverence, and Fear of God, if you take away what is consecrated, what is dedicated to him, you do no better than rob God himself; and rob him with all those Circumstances which most offend and grieve him. *Tremellius* renders it *spoliatis me*, but the Vulgar hath *configitis me*, which is worse: Spoiling a Man, supposes some great Act of Violence in the Circumstance, but a Man that is spoiled may be yet left in liberty to shift for himself, and may find Relief again by others; but *configitis me*, you have not been content to rob and to spoil me, but you have nailed me, you have bound me fast, that I cannot stir to keep myself, nor to go to others to help me. He that commits Sacrilege, hath done the best he can to bind God so fast, to put him in that Condition, that no Body could serve him; and therefore amongst the *Jews*, he that was guilty of it was thought to offend God *primario*, and to sin against the first Table, whereas, other Thefts or Robberies were but Offences against the second Table, they spoiled not God himself: and we cannot think reasonably that this was a Sin only under the Law, and is none under the Gospel. If there had been no such thing in Nature, *St. Paul* sure would never have reproach'd the *Romans* with their Hypocrisy, in pretending to abhor Idolatry, and yet committing Sacrilege. And that Argumentation by interrogating is very observable, as if Idolatry and Sacrilege were one and the same Sin; *Thou that preachest a Man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a Man should not commit Adultery, dost thou commit Adultery? Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit Sacrilege? Non multum distat*, says the learned *Grotius*, *falsos deos colere, & verum spoliare*; there is very little Difference between adoring false Gods, and robbing the true God. And that the robbing and defrauding the Church is this very Sacrilege condemn'd, appears evidently by that Saying of the Town-Clerk in the *Acts*, *Ye have brought hither these Men, which are neither Robbers of Churches, or blasphemers of your Goddes*, *Acts xix. 37*. Where the same Word is used in the Original (*ιεροσυλας*) which *St. Paul* uses to the *Romans*, which is nowhere applied to any other Robbers throughout the Scripture. If it were possible that Men who have no Piety should have any Justice, even that alone, without the other, would give a Rule in this Point: With what Justice can that, which the Goodness and Bounty of our Ancestors have directed to our Use, be taken away, and applied to another, nay, to such a one as we are morally sure is a Use the Founders or Donors would never have given the same? I doubt not, but there may be a Supposition of such Uses as may not be agreeable to the Policy and Peace of the State, but then the Act itself is void, and no such Grant can be made; or, if the Policy of succeeding Times find that Use (being a civil Use) inconvenient to the present Temper, and so abrogate it, it will be still as if there were no Donation, and the Thing given must revert to his Use, whose it would naturally have been if there had been none such. Neither can Laws in those Cases alter the Matter of Right and Justice; it may render me more potent to do Hurt and Injury, by making that Damage and Injury unpenal to me; it cannot make the Thing I do, just, or lessen my Guilt before God; I speak of Things evil in themselves, as all Things are which God himself hath expressly inhibited to be done; and therefore, if there were an Act of Parliament, which authorized the Stronger to rob or kill the Weaker, I do not think any Man will say, that is less Murder or Theft before God, than if there were no such Act; and, I confess, I cannot apprehend how spoiling

ing or defrauding the Church can be less Sacrilege, by what Authority soever Men are qualified to commit it.

But if we examine this a little farther, we shall find, that though no Man (as I said before) denied Sacrilege to be a Sin, yet very many deny That to be Sacrilege, which hath been commonly accounted Sacrilege: They do not, or seem not to believe, that it is the same Sin in the Gospel than it was in the Law; at least, that Things do not become dedicated in the same Manner to God under the Gospel, as they did under the Law: because, as to a Gift there is always to be a Receiver as well as a Giver, so there is not Evidence under the Gospel, that God doth accept and receive what is given, as there was under the Law, and therefore that it cannot be Sacrilege: They are contented that it shall be Sacrilege as it is Ecclesiastical Robbery; and that as it is Felony to steal a Pot out of a common House, so it shall be Sacrilege to steal the Chalice out of the Church, and are willing that they shall be equally punished for it; but they are not all satisfied to allow that Distinction, or that there is any difference of Places now: And they are in truth the more ingenuous of the two, and they will best define the committing of Sacrilege, who do reject all difference and distinction of Persons and Places; and so neither leave God himself a Capacity of being robbed, nor suffer those who claim under him, by serving at his Altar, or his Church, to have a Propriety in any Thing, of which they may not be deprived for the Conveniency of a Great Man, or of the State in which they live. But these Men may remember, that they give no better, or indeed other Reasons for this their bold Assertion, than their Progenitors the Heathens did, when they were possessed with their Spirit, to contradict a Definition of Sacrilege, current in all Times, as agreeable to the Law of Nature: *Quisquis id quod deorum est sustulit, & consumpsit, atque in usum suum vertit, Sacrilegus est*: They thought they refuted this Proposition very substantially, when they denied this to be Sacrilege, because of the universal Power and Dominion the Gods had over all Things and Places, *quia quicquid sublatum est ex eo loco, qui deorum erat, in eum transfertur locus qui deorum est*. Nor need there be another Answer given to them, than the Philosopher, who I doubt was a better Divine than many of their Teachers, then gave, *Omnia quidem deorum esse sed non omnia diis dicata*; and he convinced them by an Argument very like their own, That all the World was the Temple of the immortal Gods (*solum quidem amplitudine illorum ac magnificentia dignum*;) & tamen sacris prophana decerni, & non omnia licere in angulo, cui nomen fani impositus est, quæ sub cælo & conspectu syderum licent; many Things may be done in other Places, which are neither fit or lawful to be done in Churches or Places dedicated to God's Service. The most sacrilegious Person cannot do any Injury to God, *quem extra ictum sua divinitas posuit, sed tamen punitur quia tanquam deo fecit*. If this were not known to be Seneca's, it might be well owned by those Casuists who are to dispute with these Men; who yet, it may be, will rather chuse to be converted by the Philosopher, as it is the Dictate of Natural Reason, without the Authority of the Church. And it can never be enough lamented, that after Places have been set aside in all Nations, from the Time of which we have any Records, and assigned for the peculiar Service and Worship of that Divinity that was there acknowledged; and after so much pious Care for the Building of Churches to that End, from the Time that Christianity had any Authority in the World; that the Christian Clergy, owned and

acknowledged under that Appellation, and who, according to the Judgment of a learned Man, I think, as any Age hath brought (Mr. Mede) can derive their Descent from the Apostles themselves; that is, from those for whom their Lord and Master prayed unto his Father, (*John xvii. 16, 17.*) *Sanctify them (Father) unto or for thy Truth, thy Word is Truth*; that is, saith he, Separate them unto the Ministry of thy Truth: I say, it is Matter of great Lamentation, that these Places and these Persons should now be esteemed so common, and of so little regard, and to be looked upon as the only Places and Persons to which an Injury cannot be done, or to whom an Affront or Indignity cannot be committed. And it is a very weighty Observation by the said Mr. Mede (who never received Tithes or Offerings, and was too little known in the Church whilst he lived) That they are in a great Error, who rank Sacrilege as a Sin against the Eighth Commandment; for though he that commits Sacrilege, indirectly and by Consequence robs Men too, namely, those who should live upon God's Provision; yet, as Sacrilege, it is a Sin of the First Table, and not of the Second, a Breach of the Loyalty we immediately owe to God, and not of the Duty we owe to our Neighbour; and then he cites the Text mentioned before in *Malachi, Will a Man rob God, &c.* And truly, methinks there is too much said in the *New Testament* against this Sin, to leave it in the Power of any Man to imagine, that what is said in the *Old* is abrogated.

No Man must imagine, that this monstrous Sin is contracted to, or in any one Climate or Region, and affected only by those of any one Religion: It is equally spread amongst all Nations, and more practised and countenanced amongst those of the Catholick, than of the Reformed Religion; at least was first introduced and practised by them, before it was by these. Emperors and Kings contrive and permit it; and Popes themselves no otherwise contradict it, than that they would not have it committed, without their special Licence and Dispensation; by which it was first planted in *England*, and as warrantably propagated afterwards by him, who had as much Authority to do it himself, as with the Consent of the Pope. They who know how many Abbies, and other Ecclesiastical Promotions, are at present possessed by Laymen, and what Pensions are daily granted upon Bishopricks, and other Revenues of the Church, to Laymen and other secular Uses, throughout the Catholick Dominions of *Germany, Italy, France* and *Spain*, will rather wonder that there is so fair Revenues yet left to the Church in Protestant Countries, than that so much hath been taken away; which for the most Part was done in Catholick Times, and by Catholick Authority: And it is a wonderful Thing, how little hath been said in the one Church or the other, in Justification or Excuse of what hath been so much practised in both; and they who have attempted it, have done it so obscurely, upon such Suppositions, and with such Reservations and Distinctions, as if they endeavoured to find out or contrive a more warrantable and decent Way to do that, which ought not to be done at all; and what they allow proves to be as unlawful by their own Rules, as what they condemn: which falls out very often to be the Case in the Writings of the Schoolmen, and amongst the modern Casuists. And it may be, they who are most conscientiously troubled and afflicted with the Sense of the Sin, and the Punishment that must reasonably attend it, and to see so many noble and great Families involved insensibly under a Guilt, that is already in some Degree punished, in their Posterities degenerating from the Virtue of their Ancestors, and their noble Blood corrupted with the most abject and vulgar Affections and Condescensions: I say, these

these good Men are not enough affected, to search and find out Expedients and Cures, to redeem these Transgressions, and to wipe out the Guilt from those, who do heartily desire to expiate for the Errors and Faults of their Forefathers. Many Men are involved in Sacrilege without their Privy or Consent, by Inheritances and Descents; and it may be, have made Purchases very innocently of Lands which they never knew had been dedicated to the Church: And it cannot reasonably be imagined, that either of These, especially if they have no other Estates, or very little, but what are marked with the same Brand, will, out of the Conscience of their Great Grandfathers Impiety, ransom themselves from a Leprosy which is not discernable, by giving away all they have; and which by established Laws are as unquestionably their own, as any Thing can be made to belong to any Man: But they will rather leave their Ancestors to pay their own Forfeitures, and be very indulgent to those Arguments which would persuade them, that what was Sacrilege a Hundred Years since, is so purged away in so many Descents, that it ceases to be so in the present Possessor: However, he will never file away the Stain that may yet remain in his Skin, with an Instrument that will open all his Veins, till his very Heart's Blood issue and be drawn out. Nor can it be expected, that he who hath innocently and lawfully purchased what was innocently and lawfully to be sold, because he finds afterwards that those Lands had so many Years since belonged to some religious House; which if he had known he would not have bought, will therefore lose his Money, and leave the Land to him, whose Conscience will give him leave to take it: for though he might innocently, because ignorantly buy it, he cannot after his Discovery sell it with the same Innocence; but he will chuse a Lawyer rather than a Bishop for his Confessor, and satisfy himself with that Title which he is sure can be defended. In a Word, he must depart too much from his Natural Understanding, who believes it probable, that all that hath been taken from the Church in former Ages, will be restored to it in this or those which shall succeed, to the Ruin of those many Thousand Families which enjoy the Alienations, though they do not think that it was at first with Justice and Piety aliened; but will satisfy themselves with the Possession, and by degrees believe, that since it must not be restored to those Uses and Ends, to which it was at first dedicated and devoted, it may be as justly enjoyed by them with their other Title, as by any other Persons to whom it may be assigned. Whereas, if learned, prudent, and conscientious Men, upon a serious Deliberation and Reflection of the great Mercy of God; and that under the Law he both permitted and prescribed Expedients to expiate for Trespasses and Offences, which by Inadvertency and without Malice, Men frequently run into; and therefore that it may be piously hoped, that in a Transgression of this Nature, he will not be rigorously disposed to exact the utmost Farthing from the Heirs of the Transgressors; who with the Authority of the Government under which they lived, and in many Cases with the Consent and Resignation of those in whom the Interest was fully invested, became unwarily Owners of what in Truth, in a Manner, was taken from God himself: I say, if such Men, upon such and other Recollections which might occur to them, would advise a reasonable Method, in which they who are possessed of Estates and Fortunes of that Kind, may well assign a Proportion of what they enjoy to such pious and charitable Uses, as may probably do as much good as those Estates did when they were in their Possession from whom they were taken, and yet not deprive the Owners of more than they may without great

great Damage part with. It is very possible, that very many out of the Observation of the Misfortunes which have often befallen the Posterity of those who have been eminently enriched by those sacred Spoils, and it may be out of some casual Reflections and Reluctancy which now and then may interrupt the most chearful Divertisements, would dedicate somewhat of what they enjoy, towards the Reparation of what Charity hath for a long time suffered; and by this Means the poor Bishopricks, which cannot support the Dignity of the Function, may be better endowed, poor Vicarages comfortably supplied, and other charitable Works performed in the Education of poor Children, and the like. And they who thus contribute, out of the Freedom and Bounty of their own Natures, will find a Serenity of Mind that will please them, and make them believe that the rest will prosper the better, and that they have more left than they enjoyed before; and when the Matter hath been well and discreetly weighed, and good Measures instilled into the Minds of Men, by Conference and Conversation, the Method and Prescription will be most powerfully given, by the Liberality and Example of those who are wrought upon by the other, or by their own Contemplation.

It is observable, that in these violent and furious Attempts against the Church, albeit his Majesty hath always publicly declared, that his not complying with them in that Particular, (the doing whereof many have supposed would have procured him his Desires in all other Particulars) proceeds purely from Matter of Conscience, and principally from the Conclusion, that what they desire is Sacrilege; there hath been no Application to his person, nor any sober Animadversion in Writing, to inform his Judgment that it is not Sacrilege; but only some Allegations of former Times, it may be faulty in that Particular, and the Authority of that Council which think they have Power to compel him to consent to it, whether it be sacrilege or not: nor hath that Assembly of Divines, who have so frankly given their Consent to the Destruction of that Church to which they had formerly subscribed, and who are so ready to apply Satisfaction to the Consciences of Men, in many Things which are enjoined against the Light of their own, yet presumed to publish any thing to inform the Minds of Men in this Argument. So that there being so little said for it, how much soever done, a Man cannot so easily enlarge his Thoughts in a Disquisition against it; but had best enlarge his Heart by Prayer, that the Torrent of worldly Power, or Temptation of Profit, may neither overwhelm or corrupt him, to what his Conscience, Reason or Understanding can never otherwise be invited.

Of the Reverence due to ANTIQUITY.

THERE is not, it may be, a greater Obstruction in the Investigation of Truth, or the Improvement of Knowledge, than the too frequent Appeal and the too supine Resignation of our Understanding to Antiquity to what was supposed long since to be done, or what was thought or known to be the Opinion of some Men who lived so many Ages before us: say supposed to be done, because we are so totally ignorant of all that was originally done from that Time that deserves the Name of Antiquity, that we know nothing of what was done in the most ancient Times, but by the Testimony of those Men who lived so many Hundred, nay Thousand Years after the Persons lived, or the Things were done of which they give us the Account. So that we were in a very ill Condition, if it in any way concerned us to know what was said or done in those Times, of which we have so dark and obscure, at least very questionable Relations and Information given to us. And as we are liable to be misled in the forming our Practice or Judgment by the Rules and Measures of Antiquity with reference to the civil and politick Actions of our Lives, so Antiquity will be as blind a Guide to us in Matters of Practice or Opinion relating to Religion, otherwise than as that Antiquity is manifest to us in the Bible; which, as it is the most ancient Record we have of any kind, of what was said or done in the World from the Beginning thereof, so it informs us sufficiently of all that we are obliged to think, or to do; and what is ever is too hard for us there to understand, is in no degree necessary for us to know: and yet we may lawfully endeavour to inform our selves of what is difficult there, though we may be deceived in our Inquiry, because there is no Penalty upon being deceived. The Custom is so universal, among those who wrestle to support the Strength of every Opinion in Religion, to appeal to the Judgment and the Practice of the Primitive Times, that Standards-by are apt to believe, that every one of the Litigants know very well where to find the Judge to whom he appeals; and yet there was never any Difficulty reconciled and determined by that Judicatory: Nor in truth do the Appellants well understand what themselves mean by the Appeals they make; nor would have reason to acquiesce in the Judgment, if they could receive it by agreeing upon it. I would be glad to know what Men mean, who speak of the Opinion of the Primitive Times; do they mean the concurrent Testimony and Consent of those Times, or the Opinion and Practice of some pious and learned Men, who lived in those Times? they mean the Time of the Apostles, alas! we may warrantably and piously say, that it was a very wicked and a sinful Time; nor had Christianity itself the Testimony and Consent of that Time, though it was received by many, by their Doctrine, Miracles, and Example.

A Man might reasonably believe, that the Integrity of Christian Religion was most manifest in the Time of our blessed Saviour himself; especially in those who were converted by himself; were Auditors of his Sermons upon the Mount, which comprehend the whole Faith and the whole Duty of Christianity; heard all his Explanations and Expositions upon the Prophets, in whom they all believed; and who, he had made appear to them, had clearly foretold his Coming, and what he was to do and suffer: They who observed and were well acquainted with the Simplicity

and Purity of his Life, with his Wisdom and Knowledge, evidently more than human; who saw his Miracles of all kinds wrought in their Sight, by his Word, by his Eye, by his Hand, by others touching him, and the like; and were by all this informed, converted, received and baptised into his Faith, professed to believe all the Things which he said, and that he was the very Person whom he declared himself to be, and whom they had so long expected; who would believe but that the full and whole Lustre of Christianity would shine in these Converts? Yet it quickly appeared, that all this Conviction of their Reason, all this Manifestation to their Sense, met with strong Contradiction in their Hearts, from the Difficulty of the Matter. The Apostles themselves were startled, and knew not what to think or do; and after that St. *Peter* had confess'd that *Jesus* was Christ, the Son of the everliving God; which he had reason to do, when he had seen him (together with *James* and *John*) disfigured upon the Mountain, and had heard the Voice from the Clouds, *This is my beloved Son*; yet neither of them could understand *what the rising from the dead should mean*, (Mark ix. 10.) and St. *Luke* tells us, that when our Saviour informed the whole Twelve, at his going up to *Jerusalem*, of all Things that were written by the Prophets concerning him, and which were then to be accomplished, *That he should be delivered to the Gentiles, and should be mock'd and spitefully entreated and spitten on, and that they should scourge him and put him to Death, and the third Day he should rise again, they* (the whole Twelve) *understood none of these Things; and this Saying was hid from them, neither knew they the Things which were spoken*, (Luke xviii. 34.) Christ himself thought it not fit to explain that most important Point to them, well knowing that in that Part of the Resurrection they must have another Assistance to their Faith, than his own Words could give them; and therefore we see how long it was before that Article could gain Belief, even after his actual Resurrection; and how then he condescended to convince their Senses in all Circumstances, before he could obtain their Belief in that Point, which concerned them more than all the rest; nor could less than the Descent of the Holy Ghost finish that Part of the Creed, and propagate that Doctrine. And when our Saviour enlarged himself upon the Sacrament, and told them of *eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood*, this seemed so very obscure a Discourse to them, that many of his Disciples said, *This is a hard Saying, and who can bear it?* And St. *John* tells us, *From that time many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him*; (Joh. vi. 66.) so unstable and irresolute were these Primitive Christians, converted and informed by himself, and so unfit to teach others their Duty. And it is the less wonder, if the same difficult Arguments are still litigated by Men of different Fancies and Understandings, and that the multiplying Words and Disputations with new Terms and different Expressions, do still add to those Difficulties.

Let us in the next Place enquire what Light we may receive from the Age in which the Apostles themselves lived; which must be the next Primitive Time to that of our Saviour; and from whom we received indeed all that we know of our Saviour, and ample Directions what we are to believe, and what we are to do in order to our Salvation: But of that Time we have not any Information of any of the Actions or Dictates of our Saviour or the Apostles, which we are in any degree obliged to give Credit to, but what is left to us by themselves in the sacred Scriptures; and whatsoever hath been written since to inform us of either, hath been written by none, but such who lived not till many Hundred Years after the Death of those Apostles, whose

whose History they have given Life to: And if we seriously consider how little Credit we our selves give to any History that was written two Hundred Years since, by any Persons who did not live in those Times of which they wrote, the great Absence of Ingenuity in those who write what themselves might have seen, and the extreme Passion, Ignorance and Partiality in those Relations, may reasonably be excused for want of Reverence to those Authors, who so many Years after the Death of the Apostles relate, how confidently soever, the Actions and Words of those Apostles; some whereof are very different from, if not contradictory to the very Relation they have left to us of themselves. Whosoever hath taken the Pains to peruse and examine the Histories which have been written, and the Relations which have been made, of the Transactions the last Hundred Years within the Compass of *Europe*; by Men who have set their Names to what they have writ, and many whereof have been of equal Credit, and opportunity of knowing the Truth of what passed in their Time, with any who have been before them; they shall find so much Partiality and want of Sincerity in some, who best understood the Things of which they writ; so much Presumption and Ignorance in others, who neither did nor can be presumed to understand the Matters which they writ; so great Errors in Point of Time, and mistakes in the Names of Persons; that if the Men were alive to whom many Actions are imputed, they would neither remember the Places, nor the Time, nor know that they themselves are described, or mentioned to have been there; so great Contradiction in the relation of Actions themselves, and greater of the Grounds and Causes which produced those Actions; such a mixture of Oratory and Rhetorick with History, to disguise and conceal Things that were done, and in other Cases to enlarge and amplify more than was done; to exalt this Man, and to depress that; and artificially to work upon the Affections, and even corrupt the Judgment of the Reader: I say, whosoever hath taken the Pains to discover this, as every Man hath discovered it who hath taken the Pains, will not venture his Faith upon the Integrity of the Reports in those dark Times; which were neither more innocent than these, nor were the Persons who lived in those Times generally better qualified for the examining the Truth and Ground of those Reports, than they who live in the present Age; who by the Improvement of all kinds of Learning by the Knowledge of Languages, and by the Communication of all that was known, or was thought to be known by those who lived before, have many Advantages towards the Perfection of any Science, above those Times to which they would have us to resort for Information. And if Wisdom and Understanding be to be found with the Ancient, and in Length of Days, that Time is the oldest from which Men appeal to the Infancy of the World; and this advances more the Veneration that is always due to the gray Hairs of the Aged, who must be presumed to know more than Young; who likewise shall have much to answer, if when they come to be old, they do not know more, and judge better than they could who were old before them. And this is the best Way to preserve the Reverence that is due to Age, by hoping and believing that the next Age may know more, and be better, than that in which we live; and not to rob that of the Respect that will still be due to Antiquity, by unreasonably imputing it to the Time which we have outlived.

For the very Age of the Apostles, of which I say we know nothing but what they have left and given us Notice of; and notwithstanding the compleat Directions and Prescriptions which they have bequeathed to us, we all

see,

see, that no one Controversy that is at present in the Christian Church, can receive a Determination, or procure a Submission, by any Thing contained in Scripture; each Party alleging the same, or some other Part of Scripture, for the Support and Defence of their different, and sometimes contradictory Opinions: And we cannot but observe, that though there were as great Errors, and as destructive to Christian Religion, set on Foot and discover'd, whilst the Apostles themselves lived, or so soon after that they could not but foresee; and which are of a greater Magnitude, than any which are at this Day between Christians; they did not think fit to prevent the Growth and Improvement of them, by making plain Commentaries upon those Places of Scripture which gave Rise to those Debates: Nor did their plenary Determination, that the Law was intirely abolished, and that to them who should hereafter be circumcised, the Gospel would profit them nothing, find that Resignation and Obedience, but that very many, who successively were Bishops of *Jerusalem* after St. *James*, were all circumcised: so far they thought it necessary to comply with many Christians who retained still that Superstition to the Law, rather than to submit to the Rigour of the Apostle. Though the Heresy of *Arius* was not full blown till many Hundred Years after the Apostles, yet the Seeds thereof appeared even in their Times, or very quickly after: For *Cerintbus*, in the sixty third Year after the Passion of our Saviour, publicly denied his Divinity; which being improved (as all Heresies used to be) by the *Gnosticks* and others who succeeded, was at last carried to that monstrous Height by *Arius* and his Complices; nor could the Authority of the Council of *Nice* extinguish it. The Apostles thought it enough to cause the Gospel to be published to all the World, and with them their own Commentaries in their several Epistles, upon occasion of several Disputes which they found grown in their Churches; and rather endeavour'd to extinguish those Disputes by introducing the severe Practice of Christian Duties, than by examining and explaining the Matter of those Disputes; foreseeing that the Restlessness and Curiosity of the Nature of Mankind, the Pregnancy, and Fancy, and Invention of succeeding Ages, would be always raising of Doubts, and making new Interpretations of whatsoever was or should be said: and therefore, having (as is said) composed the Scriptures for the Standard of Christian Religion, and required Submission and Obedience to the Sovereign Powers as a vital Part of it, they concluded that the Propagation and Advancement of it would be best provided for by the Sovereign Power of the several Nations of the World; which, observing the Foundations laid and prescribed by them in the Scriptures, would raise such Superstructures for the Exercise and Practice of Religion, as would be most agreeable to the Nature, Temper, and Inclinations of the People, and for the Peace of their several Dominions; their own Experience having sufficiently informed them, that though the Substance must be the same in all, the Forms and Circumstances must be different in several Climates and Regions. And since the Primitive Times in which the Apostles lived, will yield no other Directions than what are contained in the Scripture, and that we know no authentick Account of any Importance in some Hundred of Years after their Time, (which is a very great *Hiatus* in History) methinks we should not hope for any notable and exact Information from any other Primitive Times which succeeded.

We shall not however avoid looking back again into those Primitive Times, to which we are so often sent for Instruction, when we have a little viewed the Appeal in the other Sense, which no doubt is the more

literal Meaning of it, with reference to the Persons who lived in those Primitive Times; and then we must restrain those Primitive Times to the Age that was near Three Hundred Years after our Saviour: for till that Time we have no other Information, than from those who began not to live till near that Time; and who cannot, without unreasonable Partiality, be presumed to know more of the Two or Three Hundred Years before they were born, than some Men in this present Age may be thought to know of the last Two or Three Hundred Years; since they of the former Time, to whom we pretend to give most Credit, did never pretend to know any Thing by Divine Revelation or Inspiration, nor had they Resort to more credible Records for their Information, than they of this present Age have for so much of the preceding Time. And yet all that we can receive from them cannot amount to a clear Conviction in any important Matter of Fact, which they deliver to us; when others of the same Time, who may be presumed to know as much as they, either contradict their Assertions, or take no Notice of such Matter of Fact to have been: Which we shall too often find to be the Case in the Writers of the most ancient Times. Let us come then to that plain Meaning of the Provocation, that in Difference of Opinion upon any Christian Practice, or Christian Precept, comprehended in or deduced from Scripture, or relating to either, our safest Direction will be from the Judgment or Opinion of those Fathers, whose Writings are left to us, and who lived nearest the Primitive Times, and from those Councils which were celebrated by the Primitive Bishops in those Times: And few Men having the Hardiness to be thought to undervalue either the one or the other, (how just Exceptions soever they have to both) they who differ most in their Practice and Opinions, do with equal Confidence aver their Submission to that Tribunal, which they call the Sense of Antiquity, and which they do with equal Reason urge in Defence of their mutual Contradictions; for they do find in at least some of the Fathers, it may be in all, what may very well be applied to all their Purposes, as they find in others of them, and often in the same, what may seem to favour the contrary Opinion: And therefore, though the concurrent Consent of Fathers and Councils in any one particular Conclusion, cannot but confirm any modest Man in the believing thereof; yet any of their dissenting and contradicting other Conclusions, and in which they frequently contradict each other, need not shake any Man in his believing what, upon perusal of what they say, and the Reason of their Opinions by his own Reason, he judges to be true, though contrary to what many, it may be most of them have believed. Nor is there any one Christian Church in the World, that at this Time doth believe all that the Fathers did believe and teach in their Time, even in those Things in which they did not contradict each other, nor is it the worse for not doing so; nor is there any one Church in the Christian World, that at this Day doth enjoin and observe all or the greater Part of what was enjoined and practised in the Primitive Church. And therefore it is very little better than Hypocrisy, to pretend that Submission and Resignation to the ancient Fathers, and to the Primitive Practice, when they very well know, that the Learning and Industry of pious Men who have succeeded the Fathers, and the great Skill in Languages which they have arrived to, together with the Assistance they have received from them, have discovered much which was not known to them, and made other Interpretation of Scripture than was agreeable with their Conceptions: And that the Difference of Times, the Alteration of Climates, the Nature and Humour of Nations and People, have introduced many

many Things which were not, and altered other Things which were in the Practice of the Primitive Church, and observed in the Primitive Times: of all which several Instances shall be given in the ensuing Discourse. And we have no Reason to believe that such Introductions or Alterations are unacceptable to God Almighty, or that he ever meant to limit Posterity, when his Church should be propagated and spread over the Face of the Earth, to observe all that was at first practised, when all the Christians of the World might have been contained in two or three great Cities; which very probably they might have been, though they were farther dissipated, when most of the Apostles themselves were dead: And we may piously believe, that our Saviour himself and his Apostles, who knew well how far the Church in Time would be extended, would not have reduced the Christian Faith and Doctrine into so little Room, and left so little Direction for the Government thereof, if they had either expected such a Union of Opinion and Judgment in all Propositions which might arise, or be drawn from the former, as some Men fancy to be necessary; or if they had not intended or foreseen, that in the latter, very many Things would depend upon the Wisdom and Discretion of Christian Princes; who, according to the Customs and Manners of the Nations where Christianity should be planted, would establish and alter many Things, as they saw from Time to Time like to advance and contribute to the Growth and Practice thereof. This Liberty God permitted to his own Church of the *Jews*; which, notwithstanding his so particular Prescription of whatsoever he thought fit for his Worship, introduced many Things, and left out other Things which they had been accustomed to: And methinks we may more piously and more rationally believe, that God was not displeased with the Discontinuance of the Feast of Tabernacles, at least in that Manner that was prescribed and enjoined by himself; than that King *David*, the Man after God's own Heart, and in whose Time we have Reason to believe the Religion of the *Jews* to be in its greatest Integrity; or that *Solomon*, in whose Time their Church was in its full Lustre, and God himself was so well pleased; and *Hezekiah*, and so many good and pious Kings who succeeded, would for a thousand Years together have discontinued an essential Piece of God's Service so literally prescribed by him; and that *Nehemiah*, out of the Scruple which his Melancholy suggested to him, and in which Piety would not restrain him, upon his exact Perusal of the Law, in which he found that the Lord had commanded *Moses*, that the Children of *Israel* should dwell in the Booths in the Feast of the Seventh Month, which was that of Tabernacles, revived the Order and Method of observing that Feast very warrantably, without any reproach upon those excellent Kings and Priests, who had as warrantably (we may believe) discontinued it: many as material Alterations as that having been introduced by Succession of Time and Difference of Climates, and Natures of People, both before and since, into the Church of God.

Do the Opinions of the present Church in any Christian Climate concur with the Primitive in Angels or Devils; or with that Doctrine of the *Chilias*, concerning the Thousand Years of Christ's Reign upon Earth, which was the Judgment of the Fathers, for near, if not full Three Hundred Years? Is it the Practice any where now to worship towards the East, to fast in Sackcloth and Ashes, and lying prostrate upon the Ground, which was the Custom in the Primitive Time? What a Clutter would it make, if we should celebrate the Nativity of our Lord in *May*, as it was in some, and in *September*, as in others of the *Greek Churches*; nor was it
ever

ever kept at the Time it now is till after *Constantine's* Time, by the *Latin* Church; which taught or imposed it upon the *Greek* Church in the Time of *Chrysostom*. And they who have taken much Pains in Chronology, undertake to demonstrate how that Mistake insinuated it self into the Church; and *Joseph Scaliger* thinks he hath made it evident, that our Saviour was born about the End of *September*; and others make it to be on the 24th of *September*, which was then in the Time of the Feast of *Tabernacles*, which would answer to the other signal Parts of his Life, which fell out to be at the other two great Feasts: And sure, if this had been thought of, it would have made a very notable Alteration in the Stating of the *Gregorian* Account or Calculation. And if the Church could make these Changes, why not others, and other Times, as Observation and Experience should find necessary? Nor doth it seem a natural Thing, that Religion should arrive at its Perfection in its Infancy; nor doth it appear that the Church could be in its full Vigour in our Saviour's Time, or in the Time of the Apostles; for many learned Men believe, that the Policy of the Christian Church could not extend it self till the Policy of the *Jewish* Church was determined, which was not till after the Destruction of the Temple, which was after the Death of all the Apostles, but only of St. *John*; and from that Time it did make indeed a great Progress in Order and Direction, how dark an Account soever hath been transmitted to us of it; and that Order and Direction as the Time and the Persons made most counselable, and not the same in or to all Places. But what then, shall Antiquity be despised by us, and the great Learning and Piety of the first Lights, the Reverend Fathers of the Church be undervalued, and their Judgment looked upon without Reverence? God forbid. We resort to Antiquity as the best Evidence of what was then done, and think we have the same liberty in the perusal of the Monuments thereof, those Conduits which convey the Information of what was then done to us, as in other History, which it may be hath been transmitted with more care and exactness; to consider the improbability of this Matter of Fact, and so doubt the Veracity of it, the Prudence and Fitness of another, and think it might have been better done. And so we look upon the Fathers, and what they said and what they did, with full Reverence, though not with full Resignation; we admire their Learning and their Piety, and wonder how they arrived to either in Times of so much Barbarity and Ignorance in those Places where they lived; and thank God for enlightening them to give Testimony for him in those Ages of Darkness and Infidelity, and for the Instruction and Information that we have received from them; and our Reverence is the greater to them, for having seen so much in so great Darkness; and yet we cannot but think that Darkness hindred them from seeing all: And when we consider the Faction and Distemper of the Times they lived in, we may, without lessening the Estimation we ought to have for them, believe, that that Distemper and Faction might have some Influence upon them, and mislead them in some Particulars: And when they so often contradict one another in many Things, and many of them themselves in some, it cannot be reasonable to oblige us to submit in all Things to which they all consent, if our Reason makes it manifest to us that they are in the wrong; though I do not know that we do dissent from them in any such Particular, yet we see all that they did, and we may modestly believe that they did not see all that we do. It would be a very impudent Thing to say, that St. *Austin* was not a very pious and devout Man, of a most Christian Temper and exemplary Humility; or that St. *Jerom* was not a very learned Man and a profound Scholar: but no degree

Degree of Modesty will oblige a Man to believe, that the former had the Knowledge of the learned Languages, or of all that Learning which hath flourished in *Europe* since that Time; or that the other was not a very angry Man, easily transported with Passion, and did not with all necessary Ingenuity set down the Words or the Sense of his Adversary.

We cannot forget St. *Austin's* Opinions in many Particulars, which are not now received in any Church; That God doth not create the Soul, but that it is *ex traduce*, and begotten with the Body by the Father; That Infants who die before Baptism are condemned to the Torments of Hell-Fire; That the receiving the Sacrament is absolutely necessary to all Infants after they are baptized, upon that Text of our Saviour in St. *John*, *Nisi manducaveritis carnem meam*, &c. That the Saints shall reign a Thousand Years, according to the Opinions of the *Chiliasmists*. All which Particulars were believed by most, if not all the Fathers for many Hundred Years, without Contradiction or Doubt, and yet are not received by any Church. Nor can we forget St. *Jerom's* own Excuse for himself, when many Overights were objected to him by St. *Austin*, *Ut simpliciter fatear, legi hac omnia, in mente mea plurima coacervam accito notario, vel mea vel aliena distavi, nec ordinis, nec verborum interdum nec sensuum memor*. Nor as his Excuse better, for somewhat he had writ in his Commentary upon St. *Matthew*, *Quod tempore angustiae coactus fuerit eos summa celeritate scribere*; which may very reasonably excuse us, for well weighing and considering what he says, as well as that it is he who says it. And we have the more Reason for this, because his Presumption in some Places is so great, that he takes upon him to contradict the very Text of Scripture, as besides what he says upon other Texts) in his Commentary upon St. *Paul's* Epistle to *Titus*, he very plainly, and without any Apology, declares that the Inscription upon the Altar in *Athens* was the same that St. *Luke* hath set it down to be, *Ignoto Deo*; but says it was, *Diis Europæ, Asiae & Africae, Diis ignotis & peregrinis*; which, I suppose, few Men will chuse to believe against the Authority of St. *Paul* and St. *Luke*. We may have a very just Esteem of the Gravity and Judgment of St. *Ambrose*, and of the Piety and Eloquence of St. *Chrysostome*; and yet believe that they were both too credulous in the Point of Miracles, and may smile at some of those which they too much extolled, because we have the same Information which they had. And, not to say any thing of both their Expositions upon some Places in Scripture, which are rejected by most learned Men, with great Reason, if not Evidence of Scripture; it is the more wonderful that those holy Fathers should be transported with so easy a Faith to give Credit to those reports, since it was above Three Hundred Years after the Death of the Apostles, before any of those Miracles, Visions or Revelations were heard of in the Church: And that which brought them first into Credit, and brought upon those Fathers, seemed not like to have found such implicit designation, it having been wrought in the Time of *Julian*, if ever; who, when he offered Sacrifices to *Apollo Daphneus*, and obtained no Answer, demanded why he was so mute? and then the Oracle answer'd, that the Corps of *Babylas*, the Martyr, buried near the Temple in *Daphne* (the suburbs of *Antioch*) would not suffer it to speak. This Conceit made quick impression upon many weak Men, who thought it very warrantable to encrease the Reverence that was due to the Memory of Martyrs, and thereby to the Christian Faith, by any Art or Artifice whatsoever; and believed, that other Martyrs Bones would upon trial be found as territorial to the Devil as those of *Babylas*, which they by Experience observed

to be true: and all the World rang so with the Miracles done by Martyrs, that many pious Men were surpris'd and carried away with the Illusion. Yet our learned Countryman Mr. Mede observes, that the Christians had very long before used to keep their Assemblies at Coemeteries and Monuments of the Martyrs, and yet had never heard of any Virtue or Miracle that had proceeded from their Bones and Ashes, till after the Report of *Babylas*: Which Story made so deep an Impression in those two great Fathers, though they could receive but very slight Evidence of it, *Julian* having been dead near One Hundred Years, that they both made the unquestionable Truth of it an Argument, to convert those who believed not the Miracles which had been wrought by the Apostles themselves. There was not a Father in that Century of a more general Fame for Learning and Sanctity than St. *Hilary*, and yet that Father made no Scruple very dogmatically to declare, *Christi corpus nullo doloris sensu in cruce affectum fuisse*, against the implied, if not express Sense of the Evangelists. They who have diligently perused all the Fathers, have made the like Animadversions upon most of them; besides the many Censures and Reproaches which they cast upon each other, enough to raise many Doubts, and to startle Men in the so absolutely captivating their Understanding to their Authority. We do see some Rights and Customs, which we may properly call Apostolical, because they were practis'd in their Times, have been long discontinued; nor doth any body wish them restored, who would not bring Dipping, and the Love-Feasts, Community of Goods, and the Holy Kifs, into Fashion again. In a word, many Men do believe that Religion and Truth have suffered much more Prejudice by the too supine Submission and Resignation to Antiquity, and the too much Modesty and Bashfulness that restrained Men from contradicting the Antients, than they have or are like to do by our swerving from those Rules and Dictates which they have prescribed to us; and we shall have well complied with the Advice of the Prophet, *Jer. vi. 16.* when we have stood upon the old Ways, and seen the old Paths, informed ourselves of what they said, and what they did, though we do not lie down to them, and acquiesce in all that pleased them. He who will profess all the Opinions which were held by the most ancient Fathers, and observe all that was practis'd in the Primitive Times, cannot be of the Communion of any one Church in the World; as he who would follow the politick Maxims of Antiquity, and the Rules heretofore observed amongst other Nations, and it may be in his own, will be found a very inconvenient Counsellor in the present Affairs of any Court in *Europe*: For as there is a great difference between Climates and Nations, in all which there are many Things so peculiar that they cannot be transplanted; so in the same Climates and Nations there are in every Age, from the Commerce and Traffick Abroad, and from the Decay or Improvement of Arts and Sciences at Home, from too long and continued Peace, or too long and devouring War, so great Alterations in the Manners and Customs, the Humours and Natures of the same People, and even in the very Language amongst many, that if those Men who died but One Hundred Years since, should now rise again, they would scarce know their own Countries, by the Customs and Manners of the Inhabitants, the Rules observed in the Government, the Liberty assumed in yielding Obedience and Submission; and they would little better understand the Language, than the Habits and Fashions used by their own Children.

They who will take the Pains to look into the Records of former Times, and view the Religion and Policy of our own and our Neighbour Nations, from the Time that Christianity was first planted in them; and, God knows, the Prospect that we have into most of them before that blessed Season, is very dark and unpleasant; will be best able to judge and prescribe what Veneration is in Truth due to Antiquity: and it may be, they who take the best Survey of them, will hardly find a Time in which he would wish rather to have been born, or Persons with whom he could more usefully and happily have conversed, than in this very Time in which he hath been born, how vicious and wicked soever; or those worthy Persons with whom he hath or might have lived, how depraved soever the greater Number is, as it hath always been. And as such a brief Survey may easily be made perfect enough to warrant that Conclusion, so we need not be afraid of beginning our Prospect upon *Italy* itself, which is contented to think itself much degenerated, yet will be looked upon as the Seat of the Purity of Religion, and the Scene upon which the most sublime Prudence and the most subtle Policy is acted, extracted, and taught to all the other grosser Parts of *Europe*; and as to *Rome* itself, it will not discredit the Proposition we offer, that it is some hidden and concealed Providence, that Christian *Rome* hath lost so much of the Honour, and Virtue, and Glory, that Heathen *Rome* was possessed of; and that the Courage, Justice, and Piety of it, the Love of Virtue, and the Detestation of Vice, was much more notorious and confessed in that, than in this Time. And God seems to have rewarded it, by giving more excellent and accomplished Historians, to transmit the Records and Monuments to Posterity of the Honour and Integrity of those Ages, than he hath vouchsafed to Christian *Rome*, to derive the Acts of its profound Wisdom and exemplary Religion, for the Information and Instruction of the Time we live in; which may be some Evidence that he foresaw that neither the one or the other would be so exemplary as it ought to be. And it is very observable, that we have a better Transcript of every other State and Province in *Italy*, better Histories published of them, and of their Rise and Growth to the Lustre they are now in, than we have of *Rome* itself, since it took upon itself to promote Christianity; so unsollicitous that Court is, which desires to prescribe and give Laws to all other Courts, to publish the Records that should prove its Authority, or their Actions which should introduce a Reverence for that Authority.

To begin then with *Italy*: I think we may very reasonably not be sorry that we were not born there within the first Three Hundred Years, during the Times of the Ten Persecutions; when Men, Women, and Children, run in Shoals with the same Curiosity to Baptism, and to Martyrdom, before they understood the Importance of either; and when the Merit of the Martyrdom could rather consist in their Courage and Constancy in telling Truth, and not denying what they did believe, than in their understanding that Truth, and the Obligations thereof, for which they suffered; and within which Time that uncharitable Persecution and Animosity was amongst the best Christians for above fifty Years together, in that impertinent Quarrel about the keeping of *Easter*, which had no more to do with Christian Religion, than they would have who should now fall out in affirming or denying that our Saviour was or was not born upon the 25th Day of *December*; and it cannot be enough wondered at, that the same Man, *Pius* the First, should have so much Passion in that Argument, and so much Piety to suffer Martyrdom for the Faith of Christ, as he did. It is very true, that within this Time many learned (for the Learning of the Time) and godly Men

Men lived, as *Polycarp, Irenæus, Origen, Tertullian*, and others, tho' not in that Region; yet those Times saw very little of that Light which they saw, and they saw much the less for the Darkness of those Times; nor hath the Catholick Church at any Time since subscribed to all that was delivered by those Fathers. So that those first Three Hundred Years, nor the Persons who lived in them, are those Primitive Times, to which we are called upon to pay our Veneration. And of those Millions of Martyrs which suffered Death in several Kingdoms, the Names of many Hundreds of whom are transmitted to us, whether true or false, there is scarce One who hath left any Testimony behind him in Writing, of his Understanding and Knowledge of the Christian Religion; nor is it probable that they did know more than the very History of the Birth, Life, Death, and Resurrection of our Saviour, as they found it in the Evangelists. And it is yet more strange, that *Rome* itself (how ignorant soever it might be of what was done in *Asia*, and *Africa*, and other Countries far remote from them) should have so few Records of their own Christianity, that they do not well agree in the Succession of their own Popes, whether *Pius* or *Clement* succeeded *St. Peter*, whether *Cletus* and *Anacletus* were one or two Persons, and many other Particulars; nor do they pretend to know how they, and the other who succeeded them for some Hundreds of Years, come to be chosen, or what Authority they had to exercise that Charge; and the same Ignorance remains amongst them of all that was done for a long time after the Emperor was Christian; nor, which is more strange, can any Man conclude, from any thing they say, that *Constantine* himself was ever Christened, at least, nor where, nor when; plain it is, that he much advanced Christianity, and built many Churches, before he was himself baptized; and though they would have it believed, that Pope *Sylvester* christened him shortly after he came to *Rome*, (which yet was many Years after his being Emperor) *Petavius* the *Jesuit* (who hath a Place in the first Rank of their Antiquaries) affirms, that it was the Opinion of most of the Ancients, that he was not baptized till very little before his Death, which was in the Year 337, and seems to agree with Cardinal *Perron*, that it was at *Nicomedia*, by *Eusebius Nicomediensis*. So little Light we have into the Primitive Times from *Rome*, which would be thought to have kept a Diary from the Death of our Saviour. But to return: Though the next Age, in which *St. Ambrose* and *St. Austin*, *St. Basil* and *St. Gregory Nazianzen*, *St. Jerom* and *St. Chrysostome*, *St. Hilary* and others, lived and flourished; and, it may be, the Excellency of those pious Fathers, have intitled that Age, how incongruously soever, to be looked upon as the Primitive Time; yet the unbloody Persecution of *Julian*, the Heresies of *Donatus*, *Pelagius*, and *Arius*, the last whereof corrupted Emperors, Kings and Bishops, and upon the Matter covered the whole Face of the Church, the Schisms in the Government of the Church, and the great Passion and Contradiction that was between and amongst those sacred Fathers, do not invite us to any Reverence for that Time: Nor is our Veneration for the Memory of those great Lights of the Church less than it should be, tho' we believe that the succeeding Ages, and even this in which we live, have yielded many great and godly Men, not inferior in Piety and Devotion, and much superior in Learning, to those ancient, excellent Men; and for *Italy*, though Christianity had been planted there by *St. Peter*, and other Apostles, it was so unhappily cultivated, that what by the *Arian* and other Heresies, and the little Zeal of most of the Emperors (though Christians) and by the Incurſion of the *Goths*, who brought with them no less than

than Two Hundred Thousand Men, presently after the Death of *Theodosius*, (who died about or shortly after the Year 400) it became almost defaced, and afterwards so obliterated between the little and ill Christianity of the *Goths*, and the *Gentilism* of the *Vandals*, that we cannot resort to *Italy* either for Principles in Religion, or Maxims in Policy (except what were comprehended in the narrow Stratagems of the Popes, to raise their own Greatness, by infusing Jealousies into the Princes and Great Men in *Italy*, and between them and the Emperors) until the Time that *Charles Martell*, or rather his Son *Pepin*, came to *Rome*; who rather enlarged the Power and Authority of the Popes, by extinguishing the Office of the *Exarch*, and giving all that was under it to the Bishop of *Rome*, than advanced Christianity in *Italy*; which, by the frequent Schisms and corrupt Lives of the Popes, remained undervalued and dishonoured until *Charlemain* (who died but in the Year 815) came into *Italy*, totally destroyed the Kingdom of the *Lombards*, which had governed *Italy* for above the Space of Two Hundred Years, and called a Council for the composing all the Scandals and Differences, which made him Emperor of *Germany*, and appointed the Pope for the Time to come to be always made with his Approbation: And yet, God knows, even from this Time the Prospect towards *Italy* is very melancholy for many Hundreds of Years; which needs no other Circumstances of Proof, than the general Confession, that after the Year 1400 the *Greek* and *Latin* Languages began to be received, after that whole Region had been utterly unacquainted with those Languages for the Space of Five Hundred Years before. So much was then that Country, which is since looked upon as the Garden of the World, and which would be reputed the Mother of all Arts and Sciences, over-run with Slaughters, Barbarity and Ignorance; without producing in many Ages one Example of Piety and Learning, till it gave us *St. Bernard*, who died after the Year 1100, and was succeeded by the Ignorance aforesaid for so many Hundred Years: And for their present Practice of Christianity, which is not only the best Illustration, but the very Life of Religion; their proud, uncharitable, and illiterate condemning those who differ from them in Opinions, which they dare not take the Pains to understand; their uncontrolled wallowing in natural and unnatural Lusts; and their cherishing all the Degrees of the most bloody Malice and Revenge, and inculcating those Passions into their Children by Industry and Education, that they may be good *Italians*; all which are the avowed native and natural Vices of their Climate, which all the Precepts and Judgments of our Saviour cannot so much as discountenance: I say, all this professed Licence and incorrigible Practice of Wickedness, will not suffer us to wish that their Religion were transplanted into our Country, and should make us more wary in sending our untaught Youth to suck in the Poison of that impure and unclean Air.

Let us, in the next Place, make a Voyage into *Spain*, which looks upon its Zeal for Religion not inferior to *Rome* it self; and if it be erroneous, must impute it to her Fallibility; since she neither doth, nor will believe any Thing but what is prescribed by her. Here Christianity had its Refuge, was rescued and vindicated from the Corruption of *Arius*, when it had upon the Matter covered all other Churches; which shews of what Value the Integrity of a National Church may prove to be, to redeem almost the Universal from a contagious Infection. Let us therefore enquire in this good Air, to find that primitive Time from which we may fetch Examples and Rudiments for our own Instruction. *Spain*, that was so great a Lover of Antiquity as to draw over *Tubal*, the fifth Son of *Japhet*, to inhabit and

plant that Country, would not be negligent in becoming Christians as soon as any Body would come thither to instruct them; and therefore they have taken Pains to invite St. *James* to come to them. But however, their best Authors do not give us any Footsteps of their Christianity till about the Year 400, when the first Council at *Toledo* was held, and when the whole Continent of *Spain* yielded but Nineteen Bishops, as *Mariana* confesses; though others will have a Council Two or Three Years sooner at *Saragosa*, against the Heresy of the *Priscillianists*: But be it one or the other, their Christianity was very quickly covered by the Inundation of the *Goths*, and the Incurfion of the *Vandals*, and other *Northern Nations*; and after the *Goths* had possessed that Crown for the Space of Three Hundred Years, they were intirely subdued after the Year 700 by the *Moors*, and the Christian Faith upon the Matter extinguished throughout *Spain*; the little Light that was left of it being inclosed in the Mountains, from whence they issued out with very little Vigour for above One Hundred Years; and when they had afterwards recovered a good Part of *Castile*, and *Leon*, and *Galicia*, so many Kings possessed those Parts, that the *Moors* in *Portugal*, *Granada*, and *Andalusia*, continued so strong, that sometimes they paid Tribute to them, and were always inferior to them in Power: So that the *Breviary* and *Missal* of the *Goths* was not abolished, and the *Roman* introduced, till the Council of *Burgos*; which was called after the Year 1076, under the Reign of *Alonso*, the Sixth King of *Castile*, who reigned with our *William* the Conqueror: And in this Council it was that they revived the old Ecclesiastical Laws against the Marriage of Priests, when *Mariana* confesses, that the greater Part of the Clergy were married, and had Wives and Children. And it was this very King *Alonso* the Sixth, who in the Year 1085 took the City of *Toledo* from the *Moors*, after they had been in the Possession of it not many Years less than Four Hundred; and upon Surrender of the Town, the *Moor* King went to *Valencia*, and they who would remain in and about *Toledo*, enjoyed all their Lands and Goods; *T la mesquita major, quede en su poder para hazer en ella sur ceremonias*, as that Historian confesses. And that Catholick King afterwards, upon the Death of his Queen *Constantia*, married the Daughter of the *Moor* King of *Seville*, who became a Christian, and changed her Name *Zayda* into *D. Maria*, or as others say, *D. Isabella*; and from this Marriage issued the so much celebrated *Don Zanco*. And for some Hundred of Years after this Time we know little more of the Christianity of *Spain*, than by their frequent and bloody Battels against the *Moors*, and by their supine Submission and Reverence to the Judgments and Determinations of the Bishops of *Rome*, who exercised a wonderful Dominion over them; there being, besides the continual Wars with the *Moors*, such Jealousies between the Christian Kings of *Castile*, *Arragon*, *Navarre*, and *Portugal*, that neither of them durst enter into any Dispute with the Pope, for whose Authority their Subjects had more Reverence and Devotion, than for that of their own natural Kings and Princes. Nor have they more clear Records of the Advancement of any Doctrinal Opinions in Christian Religion, than they have of the Trouble they receiv'd from the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*; who about the Year 1200, or very soon after, told the People, That the Priests had not Power to pardon their Sins; that the true Body of our Saviour was not in the Sacrament of the Altar; and that the Prayers which were usually made for the Dead, did them no good: Which Opinions, *Mariana* confesses, were so much favoured by several Persons of Quality and Condition both in *France* and *Spain*, and had that Countenance from the King of *Arragon* himself,

that if St. *Dominique*, who was a great Preacher at that Time, had not converted many, and *Simon Mounfort* destroyed more by Fire and Sword, Pope *Innocent* the Third having given him all those Cities and Lands which he could take from those who cherished those Opinions, these Heresies would have spread themselves very far in the World. And it was looked upon, and is recorded as a signal Act of Zeal to Catholick Religion in *Ferdinando*, King of *Castile*, that he was so great an Enemy to those Hereticks, that he did not satisfy himself with leaving it to his Ministers to punish and chastise them, but that with his own Hands he put Fire and kindled the Wood that burned them.

It was after the Year 1250, that *Alonso*, the Tenth King of *Castile*, that the *Spanish* Language might be improved and the better cultivated, appointed that all Bargains and Sales and other Civil Instruments, which had formerly been always transacted in *Latin*, should thence-forward be made in the *Spanish* Tongue; and likewise, that the Bible should be translated into that Language: Which their Historians acknowledge did introduce such a profound Ignorance over the whole Nation, that as well Ecclesiastical as Secular Persons grew to be without any Knowledge of Learning. And there needs no other Argument of the Illiterateness of that People, and indeed of the slender Growth of Christian Religion there, than the very Canons which were established by the Council held in *Aranda*, in the Year 1473, (which was not Two Years before the Reign of *Ferdinand* and *Isabella*) whereof One was, That every Priest should be bound to say Mass at least three or four Times every Year; and another, That the chief Benefices and Dignities should not be conferred upon any who did not understand *Grammar*; a *niciguno que no sepa Grammatica*. The Truth is, how Catholick soever *Spain* is become now, it was very long before it could truly be called Christian; and whilst it was divided into several Kingdoms, there were so many *Moors* and *Jews* intermingled in all, and so little Fruit and Evidence of Christianity in any of them, that their Knowledge and their Practice were much alike; and it was after the Year 1404, that, to advance the Sanctity and Power of *Fray Vicente Ferrer* of *Valencia*, who when he preached in his own Language was understood by all Nations, a Grace granted to him (they say) only, after the Apostles, their best Historians affirm, that by his Preaching he converted in *Spain* Eight Thousand *Moors*, and christened Five and Thirty Thousand *Jews*: And yet we all know, that both *Moors* and *Jews* inhabited in all the several Kingdoms of *Spain*, besides their possessing the whole Kingdom of *Granada*, until *Ferdinando* and *Isabella*, after the Year 1480, by a War of Ten Years, and several Battles won, intirely reduced that Kingdom, and annexed it to *Castile*, after it had been possessed by the *Moors* above Six Hundred Years; and no longer suffered them to avow and exercise their Faith in his Dominions, in spite of the Threats and Menaces of the *Sultan* of *Egypt*; who sent the Guardian of St. *Francis* of *Jerusalem*, as his Ambassador, to let him know, That if he did not desist from prosecuting the *Moors*, who were of his own Sect, he would take Vengeance upon all the Christians who were his Vassals in *Egypt* and *Syria*: which diverted not *Ferdinando* from pursuing his Purpose, for which the Pope added *Catolico* to the Stile of that King in the Year 1496. By all which, or a stricter Scrutiny that may be made, it manifestly enough appears, that those Primitive Times for which we have so much Condescension and Reverence, are not to be traced out in *Spain*; and as it was not looked upon in Point of Power, or Extent of the Dominions, as equal to many other Christian Kingdoms,

Kingdoms, before the Connection under *Ferdinand* and *Isabella*; which hath been more improved under *Charles* the Fifth, and his Son *Philip* the Second. And however their Policy may since that Time have suffer'd some Decay, they will not appeal to any former Time for the Purity of their Religion; though it cannot be denied that they have had in all Ages some Persons so eminent for Piety and Sanctity of Life, that their Memories deserve to be in great Regard: But the Times in which those holy Men lived have left nothing worth the remembering, but that those Persons then lived; nor could they have been so signal in Times which had been better, or less clouded with Ignorance, and the general Practice of all Kinds of Vice and Impiety.

If we prosecute our Journey into *Germany*, we shall very little advance our Enquiry. It was late before Christianity was known, at least before it prospered and grew in any of the *Northern* Plantations. *Germany* was no sooner prepared to receive, rather than to be instructed in Christianity, but the Inundation of the *Hunns*, *Vandals* and *Normans*, soon so destroyed, and the ill Lives and the barbarous Murthers of the Emperors so disfigured it, that if it were not for some few Monasteries built, and for the Names of some Monks whom a little Piety and less Learning made very remarkable in those dark and ill Times, the Footsteps of Religion would be scarce found there in many Hundred Years; and all their Neighbours continued *Gentiles* long after *Charles* the Great had much reformed the *Western* Empire. It was near the Year 850, before the Kingdom of *Denmark* heard of our Saviour; and though *Poland* knew nothing of him till about One Hundred Years after, Christianity spread it self much faster over that than the other Kingdom; and it was full a Thousand Years before *Hungary* submitted to the same Yoke: Yet, whether from the different Manners of the People, that they were more or less corrupted with Barbarity and Savageness, or because Women contributed most to the Propagation of it, and so the Prosecution was the more violent, the Religion advanced much faster, though it appeared later in the two last, than amongst the first People; nor was *Norway* converted to be Christian till the Time of *Eugenius* the Third, who lived in the Year 1153, which was near the Age of our Grandfathers.

We have the Testimony of the best modern Historian, and who hath written with the greatest Ingenuity and Impartiality, Monsieur *Mezeray*, that *Winifred*, an *Englishman*, who changed his Name to *Boniface*, was sent in the Year 800, by Pope *Gregory* the Second, to convert *Germany* to the Christian Faith; who laboured with good Effect, and reduced many Provinces thereof: and no Part of *Saxony*, which comprehends a great Extent of Ground of that Empire, was become Christian till some Years after that Time. Nor hath there been any Age since, in which Learning and Piety hath flourished to that degree in that large Tract of the Western World, that we can resort thither for any Discovery of an important Truth, or for eminent Examples of Christian Practice. So that we may reasonably believe, that that whole Region was never more worthy of Imitation for Knowledge or Civility than it is at present, when under the distinct Government of several Sovereign Princes, though of several Professions in Religion; they seem better composed to the Exercise of Charity to each other, and to the extinguishing those bloody Emulations which have made the Strength of the Empire more inferior to some of their Neighbours, than they had ever before been. And they themselves can hardly resort to any Age that hath been before them for Instruction, how

to mend any Thing that is amiss in their present Constitution; and therefore other Men will make a very unprofitable Enquiry for that Primitive Time in that Climate, from the Purity whereof they might extract Precepts or Example, by which they may remove and purge away any Errors which have crept in, or Difficulties which perplex them in the Exercise of their Duty to God, or in the comprehending what he expects from them. The truth is, the very notable Courage and warlike Abilities of that People, their indefatigable Industry in their reading and revolving the Books in all Arts and Sciences, the Genius and natural Endowments of that Nation, seem rather peculiar and appropriated to their own Climate, than to bring any Advantage to Strangers, or to advance and refine the Parts and Understandings of other Men by their Conversation and Correspondence.

Let us continue our Progress into the most flourishing Kingdom of *France*, and discover, if we can, those blessed Primitive Times, from whence we may draw Information and Instruction, to reform the Errors of the present Age, or mend the Understanding of it; and we shall find the Dominions of the Eldest Son of the Church to have remained under Darknes as long as most of their Neighbours: for in Four Hundred Years after our Saviour the Gospel was scarce heard of amongst the *French*, but they adored Trees and Fountains, Serpents and Birds, for their Deities, and knew no other. It is true, Christianity was very much dispersed over the greatest Part of *Gaul*, which comprehended much of *Provence*, *Languedoc*, *Lyonnois*, and all *Guyenne*, where the Faith had been preached by the very Disciples of some of the Apostles, and some Churches were then built about *Narbonne* and *Lyons*, &c. but even there the Persecutions of the heathen Emperors nipped it in the Bud, that till *Constantine's* Time it appeared not with any Vigour; and their own best Historian *Mezeray* (who is an excellent Writer) confesses, that the *Gallican* Church was in great Obscurity till the Fifth or Sixth Ages; when indeed it appeared in some Lustre, and when the Titles of *Pope*, *Father of the Church*, *Holiness*, *Pontifex Maximus*, and *Servus Servorum Dei*, were common to all Bishops, and they were made by the Clergy and People, their Consecration by the Bishops of that Province, principally by the Metropolitan, and never without him. But how small Effects Christianity produced in the Lives and Manners of those who professed it, needs no other Illustration than the View of the first Kings who were baptized. *Clovis* was, upon their own Account, the first Christian King they ever had, and he was after the Year 500; and whether it had not been better for him and for his Memory he had never heard of Christ, may be doubted of those who will take a View of his Life. He laid Snares for the other Kings of *France*, who were his nearest Kinsmen, and rid himself of them by Means full of Cruelty and Perfidiousness. He perswaded *Chloderick*, Son of *Sigisbert* King of *Cullen*, to kill his own Father, and afterwards caused him to be massacred by his domestic Servants; and did many other Acts of Outrage and Barbarity, which are recorded in his Life, much more suitable to a Disciple of the *Pagan* Gods, than to one who had been baptized into the Faith of Christ; and they who would remember his monstrous Impieties, might very well have forgotten that he was ever christened. But if *France* should have concealed its being Christian, whilst the Kings and Great Men and for much the most Part of the Bishops and Clergy lived the Lives of *Pagans*, the horrible Murders and Assassinations between Fathers, Mothers and Sons, Kings and the Offspring of Kings, the multiplied Marriages, odious Impu-

rities, the Repudiations and Poisonings, and other Slaughters which followed thereupon in that Rank and Class of Men for above Two Hundred Years after *Clovis*, the Eldest Son of the Church would be found to reside in some other Kingdom: and though there were some religious and pious Men, who had sometimes the Courage to dissuade some of the most horrible Outrages, they were but laughed at for their Labours, if they were not preferred to be Martyrs in the Quarrel. *Auy*, Abbot of *Misy*, who was afterwards made a Saint, could not dissuade *Clodemir*, Brother of King *Thierry*, from putting *Sigismond* King of *Burgundy* (whom he had taken Prisoner) to Death; but though the Abbot threatened him from God Almighty with the like Punishment upon himself and his Family, he despised all he said, and caused *Sigismond*, his Wife and Children, to be massacred, and their Bodies to be cast into a Well. When *Didiere*, Bishop of *Lyons*, after the Year 600, took upon him to reprehend Queen *Brunchunde* for the notorious Scandal of her Life in all kind of Uncleanness, she found an Assembly of Bishops so devoted to her Service, that they degraded and banished the good Bishop, whom she afterwards caused to be stoned by her Soldiers. And when *Lumbert*, Bishop of *Liege*, reproved *Pepin* for having married *Alpaide* whilst his lawful Wife was yet alive, he prevailed nothing on the King; and *Dodon*, Brother of *Alpaide*, assassinated him by the Consent of *Pepin*: and this was after the Year 700. So that the *French* Historians do confess, that Baptism did not in the least assuage the Barbarity of the Christian Kings of the first Race; for they were all of them cruel and bloody until *Clotaire* the Second, who lived after the Year 750. And God knows, when Christianity had by degrees enervated those wild enormous Passions, and suppressed the fierce brutal Inclination to Blood and Murders, (for the other brutal Fire of Lust burned with much Brightness, and prevailed in many Ages) another tamer Sottishness succeeded in its place, which vented it self in Pilgrimages and Voyages into the *Holy Land*: which was the first Fruit Religion bore in *France*, and which the Popes of that Age found great Ease and Benefit in cultivating, and for which only their first Royal Saint (*St. Louis*) was canonized; there being nothing else eminent in him to support a World of Weaknesses, but that unreasonable Zeal which embarked him in those more unreasonable Wandrings, in the last of which he lost his Life. But that Christian Fury was allayed by a more Christian Discretion, after it had raged in this *Western* World above Two Hundred Years, to the Loss of many Hundred Thousand Men, whereof many were of the highest and noblest Condition, and a vast Expence of Treasure: for which there was no other Return, but the melancholy and woful Experience and Observation, how much Christian Religion was degenerated in those Places where it had been first planted; and that the incredible Treachery and Perjury of those superannuated Christians, had contributed more to the Ruin of their Designs, than all the Strength and Power of the Infidels had done. Kings and Princes grew weary of this costly and dangerous Evidence of their Faith; and the sooner, because they observed that he who had never contributed more to that holy War, than out of the rich Treasury of his Fancy, the Red Cross to be sewed on the Left Shoulder, with the Words *God will have it so*, had reaped more Benefit by it already, than they could ever hope to do; and that whilst they were attempting to recover *Jerusalem*, he had sown Tares in their own Dominions, which grew up, to the lessening their own Power over their Subjects, and to setting up an Authority above them in the Hearts of their own People; they thought it high Time to give over that

that Enterprize, and to watch a more dangerous Enemy nearer Home; and so first deluded his Importunities towards those unspiritual Warfares, with Promises to engage in them, without any Purposes to perform, until at last they were ashamed of what themselves and their Predecessors had performed in those Undertakings, and the Popes grew as much ashamed to use those Arguments which had formerly prevailed, and that the Infidels were like to come nearer to them, and need not be fought so far off as *Jerusalem*. And so all Overtures of that simple Kind rather expired, than were laid aside: and that the inexhaustible Treasure of Cruzades might not lie idle, the Pope assigned them to the Civil and Politick Ends of those Princes, which were most devoted to him; in the Dispensation whereof he did upon the Matter disinheret his Eldest Son, and gave the greatest Portion to the Youngest; reserving enough to his own Disposal, as will serve him to affront those who will not be advised by him in Matters of Faith at a distance, and who will not submit to his Temporal Authority, when their Dominions come too near to his own.

Let us then finish our Enquiry in our own Quarters; and see if we can find such an Age of our own Ancestors, whose Purity in Religion, or Integrity in Manners, may give us just Cause to blush at the Ignorance or Licence of our own. Indeed, if all Competitors would submit to the *Roman* Records, which ought to be looked upon as the best Evidence for the Birth of her own Children, we shall be found very early Christians; and that not only King *Lucius*, but the whole Kingdom, received Baptism in the Time of Pope *Eleutherius*, who was the Fourteenth Bishop of *Rome*, and lived before the Year of our Saviour 180: Nor have they any other Reason why they thought it not enough converted, till they sent *Austin* the Monk thither about the Year 600, but that it had no Dependence upon them; and which they never pretended to till after this Mission, nor obtained it till some Hundred of Years after that. It is very true, that we can in our own Registers and Memorials trace the full Footsteps of Christian Religion many Hundred Years before *Austin's* Arrival in this Kingdom; and the great Opposition and Contest he met with was from Christians, not Pagans, because they would not submit to his Authority: yet we cannot deny, but that the Savageness of those first Ages deprived us of those Records of our own, as should manifest the Reign of such a King as *Lucius*, or that we received the saving Knowledge so soon; and if we did, it was not more manifest in our Lives and Manners, than it was amongst our Neighbours, who confess they received it not in above Two Hundred Years after. But as we do most reasonably resort and submit unto the Records of Heathen *Rome*, those left by *Julius Caesar*, and the rest who succeeded him in the *Roman* Power, for the highest Antiquity and Original of the Nation that inhabited this Island; not that we think the Account they left to be ingenuous and just, but that we have no Records of our own which can contradict those, or which have preserved a better mention of us; so we are well contented to admit the Records of Christian *Rome*, as the best Evidence of the Antiquity of our Christianity. *Baronius* was a learned and industrious Collector and Inspector into Antiquity, and could resort to many Memorials concerning many other Nations, which were wanting to the Nations themselves; and as he cannot be thought over indulgent to the Church and Nation of *England*, when he published his Ecclesiastical History, so he cannot be suspected lightly to have introduced this Baptism of King *Lucius* in favour to either; and therefore we agree with him upon the Truth of it, and believe that *Lucius*

WAS

was one of the petty Kings who ruled in that Time in *England*; and it is probable, that his Dominions were in *Wales*, or some of those Provinces which were nearest adjacent to it: For, besides that there are many Marks that Christianity was first planted there, by the Churches, and the Residence of the first Bishops there; the Precedence of the Bishop of *Bangor*, as Metropolitan, when *Austin* came into *England*, and all the other Bishops refusing to submit to *Austin*, or the Pope who sent him, is an Argument that I cannot answer, and am therefore well contented that *Lucius* (for which there is so good a Record) be not only esteemed the first Christian King, but the first Christian of this Nation. We must not deny, that Barbarity covered the whole Face of this Island very long; and that after Christianity had taken some Root, and sprouted up, *Gentilism* was far from being suppressed, and appeared more in the Manners than in the Faith of the Nation. The Inundation of the *Saxons* and the *Danes* corrupted, or at least triumphed over, that Christianity which it could not extinguish; and till less than One Hundred Years before the *Confessor*, we need not much enquire what the Religion of that People was; and if we do enquire long before that, either into the Spiritual or the Temporal Estate of that Nation, we shall find very little Evidence, but such as we have reason to believe was forged long after, for the making good of somewhat that in that very Time was not thought of. However, we shall find very little that will make us much in love with, or draw much Reverence from us for Antiquity; and we may with much more Delight look upon the Pourtraitures of our Progenitors in antique Hangings, with their Pikes, Javelins, and other Arms, than upon the Description of their Lives, Manners and Policy, that is extant in any Records which have obtained Credit in the World. Yet we may justly say, for the Religion of that Time, that the Church looked to it with that Care and Gravity, that there were fewer Differences in Matters of Religion, and less Scandal in the Manners of Churchmen, than in any of the Neighbour Kingdoms. The Misfortune only was there, as in other Kingdoms, that the Religion in the Church was not strong enough to suppress the Impiety in the State, which triumphed too much; and the affected Stubbornness of our Ancestors resisted too much the modern Cultivation of their Manners, and Civility was hardly admitted into the Nation. We cannot deny, that the fresh Christianity of the *Normans* (for the *Normans* had not been Christians one Hundred Years, when *William* invaded, and was received in *England*) and the Manners they brought over with them, did very much polish the Roughness of our native Temper; and we only reserved that natural Fierceness, which made us terrible in Battle. In all other Agitations, we grew possessed of that Civility and Discretion, that made us fit for Commerce and Conversation with the other Parts of the World, and were not less polished; and towards these Perfections every Age advanced, and reformed the Errors or affected Mistakes or Humours of the former: so that we may with Reason and Modesty enough say, that the Age wherein the old Men who are now alive were born, (for it will be but Justice to leave the present Age to the Censure of those who come after us, since we take upon us to judge of those which were before us) was much superior in Piety, in Learning, in Wisdom, and in good Manners, to any that had been before it. I speak of that Part only which we are now upon the Survey of; though I think it will serve for many other Countries, though some indeed seem to have passed their Zenith: Nor would the Testimony we give of that Age be impaired, if some enormous Crimes be discovered to have been acted in that Time, some Men notably wicked to have lived

lived then, some notorious Vice to have been practis'd, and the Heirs who then succeeded noble Parents exceedingly decayed and shrunk from the Virtue of their dead Ancestors; which it may be was, and will infallibly be true in all Ages whilst the World is inhabited by mortal Men; if fewer Vices were practis'd in that Age than in the former, if they were more punished, more discountenanced than in the former, it wrought a very great Reformation. The Weeds can hardly be destroyed where the Ground is best cultivated; and since all Creatures do degenerate by Time and Negligence, it will be enough if every Age produce some new Originals to repair the Beauty of decayed Copies. A general Love of Justice, and a general Submission to the Rigour of it, a diligent Prosecution of the Improvement of Arts and Sciences, the preserving a just Esteem with Neighbour Nations, and the enjoying Peace and Plenty at Home, is the best Character and Description of a happy and a blessed Age; and we may justly say, that the Age we have appealed to was very plentifully adorned with those Blessings, though it might possibly be discredited by some Licence and Excesses.

We see now how little Beauty Antiquity (upon which we dote so much) hath, in that Walk we hitherto have endeavoured to find it; and if we should take a Voyage into the *East*, where Christianity was first planted, and visit those Countries where the Primitive Fathers both of the *Greek* and *Latin* Church lived, we should find the Age in which they lived, and the People of that Age with whom they lived, to be as barbarous as those through which we have passed, and that they themselves had the same Infirmities and the same Passions with those who succeeded them; and as they of the following were so severe against the most antient Fathers of the Church, *Origen* and *Tertullian*, that they would scarce acknowledge them to be good Christians, it is no wonder if most of them, as excellent Men as they were, did not escape the Censures of those who succeeded them; and it is an extraordinary Improvement that Divine and Humane Learning hath attained to, since Men have looked upon the Antients as fallible Writers, and not as upon those *Ne plus ultra*, that could not be exceeded. We retain, as I have said before, a just Reverence for them, as great Lights which appeared in very dark Times; and we read them rather to vindicate them from those Impositions which confident Men frequently make them liable to, to serve their own corrupt Ends, than that we cannot attain to as much clear Knowledge by reading later Writers in less Time than turning over their Volumes will require; so that we may modestly enough (which more Men think than say) believe that of the Fathers, which one of *Tully's* Orators said of the *Latin* Language, *Non tam præclarum est scire Latine, quam turpe est nescire*; it is more Shame to Scholars not to have read the Fathers, than profitable to them to have read them. And I do in truth believe (with a very true Respect to the Writers of the Third, Fourth and Fifth Ages) that there have been many Books written and published within these last Hundred Years, in which much more useful Learning is not only communicated to the World, than was known to any of those Antients; but in which the most difficult and important Points which have been handled by the Fathers, are more clearly stated, and more solidly illustrated, than in the Original Treatises and Discourses of the Antients themselves; besides the vindicating them from many Corruptions and unintelligible Expressions, which had been admitted in some former Editions, and discovering others which had been cast in to serve the Turn of the *Roman* Church. If then in truth all kind of Learning be in this Age in which we live, at least in our own Climate, and in some of our Neighbour-

3 P

bours,

bours, very much improved beyond what it ever was; and that many Errors, and some of no small Importance, have been discovered in the Writings of the Antients; why should we resort and appeal to Antiquity for any other Testimony than for Matter of Fact? and there too, without restraining our own Enquiry or rational Conjectures. The Time is come which the Philosopher foretold in his Discourse of Comets, *Multa sunt quæ esse concedimus, qualia sint ignoramus, veniet tempus quo posteri nostri tam aperta nos nescisse mirentur*: We may indeed well wonder at their gross Ignorance in all things belonging to Astronomy, in which many of the Fathers knew no more than they, and so could not understand many Places in the Scriptures; and whosoever reads their Commentaries upon the several Books of Scripture, cannot be blamed for want of Modesty, if he differs with them very often; which learned Men of all Opinions always have and always will do. We do not flatter our selves, if we do believe that we have or may have as much Knowledge in Religion as they had, and we have much to answer if we have not more; and if our Practice of the Duties of Religion be not as great and as sincere as theirs, (which we have too much reason to suspect) our Advantage in Knowledge will turn to our Reproach and Damage. Let us then, in God's Name, appeal to and imitate the Simplicity, Humility and Charity of some Primitive Christians, upon whom Ambition, nor Riches, nor Love of Life, could prevail to decline the strict Path of Virtue, or to swerve in any Degree from the Profession of the Truth, (that Truth by which they were sure they might be saved). Let us learn of them to despise those Temptations of the World, which perplex and distract, and obstruct our Journey to Heaven. Let us imitate their Courage and their Constancy, in adhering to what is right and to what is just, to which their Examples should encourage us, and those Primitive Times did yield us many such Examples worthy of our Imitation; though I must still say, it was not the Purity of the Times, but the Integrity of some Persons; the Times were at least as wicked as any which have followed, and none have followed so bad in which there have not been some Persons eminent for Virtue and Piety, who would mend the very Times if their Examples had been imitated; nor have we reason to believe, that the very Time in which we live is destitute of such Persons, but that it abounds as plentifully in such, as any Age that hath been before it, though they are never so much as talked of whilst they are alive, and it may be there is not so much care taken to preserve the Memory of them when they are dead, as there hath been heretofore. It is great pity that there is not some Collection made of the Lives and Actions of heroical and virtuous Men in several Ages, and of several Qualities and Qualifications, that there might be as well Monuments of the Virtue and Piety of all Ages, as there will infallibly be of their Folly and their Vice; and then it may be there would be as many true Histories of very extraordinary Men of the latter and even of the present Age, which would inflame others to imitate them, as there are fabulous Narrations of those excellent Men who lived in the Primitive Times, of whom we know of very few whose Lives were not writ till many Hundred Years after their Decease. And it may be justly wondered at, that both *Greece* and *Rome*, in their flourishing Time, took more care to derive to Posterity the Lives of such glorious *Pagans* who lived amongst them, and who by the lively Representation and Transmission of them still live amongst us, and who it may be have improved many Christians by the Wisdom and Virtue they have learned from them; and that there hath been so great a Negligence since Christianity hath been received,

received, in transmitting the particular Lives of great and meritorious Men in that manner, as to inflame others to follow and imitate their Examples. And of all Histories which have been yet writ, those of Ecclesiastical Affairs are much the worst, and yield least credible Information, and least Pleasure to the Reader, in the Importance of the Subject, or in the Acuteness of the Delivery; which may reasonably be looked upon as a Defect in former Ages, and very worthy to be reformed and repaired in this.

It would be a good Spur to raise our Industry, if we did believe that God doth expect a greater Perfection from the present Age, in Learning, in Virtue, in Wisdom, and in Piety, from the Benefit and Observation which he hath afforded us in all the precedent Ages: From their Defects, we have Argument to be wary, and to reform; and from what they did well, we have their Counsel and Assistance, and may the more easily improve what they did; and we have all the Obligations upon us to mend the Patterns we have received, and leave them with more Lustre to our Posterity, who are bound to exceed us again in Knowledge and all Degrees of Perfection: whereas a looking back, and prescribing Rules to ourselves from Antiquity, retards and lessens even our Appetite to that which we might easily attain; we may as well resort to old Men, to teach us to run, and to throw the Bar; if our bodily Strength grows and encreases when theirs decays, the Vigour of our Mind doth as much exceed theirs; and since we set out after they rest, we ought to travel farther than they have done, when we carry all the Land-Marks with us. It is a Caution near as old as Christianity, *Nihil, magis præstandum est, quam ne pecorum ritu, sequamur antecedentium gregem pergentes non qua eundum est, sed qua itur*; it hath always been a Disease in the World, too much to adore those who have gone before, and like Sheep to tread in their Steps, whether the Way they went were the best or not. Seneca thought that nothing involved Men in more Errors, *quam quod ad rumorem componimur, nec ad rationem sed ad similitudinem vivimus*; that we consider more what other Men have thought or done, than whether they did think or do reasonably. Nor is it out of Modesty that we have this Resignation, that we do in truth think those who have gone before us to be wiser than ourselves; we are as proud and as peevish as any of our Progenitors: but it is out of Laziness; we will rather take their Words, than take the Pains to examine the Reason they governed themselves by. But there is Hope the present Age will buoy itself up from this Abyss of Servitude, and by their avowed Endeavours to know more than the former have done, will teach the next to labour that they may know more than we do; which virtuous Emulation should continue and grow to the End of the World. It may be, the common proverbial Saying, that *the World grows every Day worse and worse*, prevails with many to believe that we have a good Title to be so, and that it is in vain to strive against our Fate; nay, some Men think that there is Prescription enough in the Scripture, as if there was such a general Decay, that the last Age shall be worse than any that have gone before; in which, I conceive, Men are very much mistaken. It is very true, that both St. Paul and St. Peter have foretold, that *in the last Days perilous Times shall come, for Men shall be Lovers of their own selves, covetous, Boasters, proud, blasphemous, &c. without natural Affections, Truce-breakers, false Accusers, incontinent, Despisers of those who are good, &c.* yet they do not tell us, that these Men, which have made a great Party in the World in every Age, shall prevail and corrupt the rest; nay, they say the contrary, *They shall proceed no farther, for their Folly shall be manifest*.

fest to all Men. So that we may hope and endeavour to accomplish this Prophecy, that the graver and the modester, the humble, the pious and the chaste Part shall be able to discountenance, to suppress, to convert, or to extirpate the other. We may as warrantably take a Measure of those Times from that Declaration of St. Peter, in the 2d of the *Acts*; *It shall come to pass in the last Days, I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesy, and your young Men shall see Visions, and your old Men shall dream Dreams.* Here is no Decay attends this Fulness of Time; no Resort to Antiquity, to chalk us out the Way to Knowledge and Understanding. We are not sure that those last Days to which both those Prophecies refer, are not already past, but we may be sure that if we spend that Time which God shall vouchsafe to give us in this World, in that Manner as he expects we should, and as he hath enabled us to do if we will, we shall leave as fair Examples of Wisdom, Virtue and Religion to those who shall succeed us, as any have been left to us by those who have gone before us; and our Posterity pursuing the same Method, the last Age will appear at the Day of Judgment less undaunted than any that hath gone before it.

MONTPELLIER, 1670.

Against the multiplying Controversies, by insisting upon Particulars that are not necessary to the Point in Debate.

MOLINS, 1672.

IT cannot but be very reasonably wondered at, and the Grounds thereof are very worthy to be enquired into and discovered, why so few Matters in Difference between Men, of what Nature soever, have ever been adjusted and determined by Disputation in Conference, or by Writing in the Way of Controversy; which are the best, if not the only Remedies and Expedients for the Discovery of Error, and for the Establishment of Truth. The first may naturally prove ineffectual, from the Excess of Passion with which the Parties abound, and which, by the Warmth and Contradiction of Debate, transports them into many more Arguments than those they came together to reconcile, and administers new Animosities, which usually deprives them of their Faculty of judging with that Sincerity they ought to have, and renders the Contention more for Victory than for Truth. But why a calm Reasoning by Writing, when the Motives may be duly weighed, the Questions clearly answered, and solid Arguments administered to all Doubts that are urged, without any personal Reflections, or undervaluing those Objections, which, however weak, are never removed by being despised, (which are the Rules all Men ought to observe in such Encounters) should not produce the wished Effect, must proceed from some depraved Affection in the one, or from want of Comprehension or Ingenuity in the other; and yet where no such Defect can be discovered in either, the Issue of those Contentions falls still out to be the same. Few Princes enter into a War with their Neighbours, but they first publish a Manifesto and Declaration of the Reasons and Grounds which obliged them to it, of the Justice of their Pretences, and of the Injuries they have received; and this they hold necessary to be done, both for the Satisfaction of their own Subjects, and to induce their Allies the more chearfully to concur in the carrying it on, and

and likewise that Neighbour Princes may not think themselves concerned in the Quarrel; but the encountering this Manifesto with the clearest and fullest Answer imaginable, in which the Injuries and Provocations appear to be only alleged, never acted, and the Pretences to be against all the Elements of Justice, and the greatest Violation of Right, and to gain that by Force, only because they have no Right to it, never prevented nor diverted that War. When they have once said what they think convenient, how untruly soever, they proceed to do what they judge will be profitable, how unjustly soever; nor hath the Interposition of other Princes, upon the Merit of such Case, usually prevented or reconciled such an Engagement. The Reason of this is manifest to all Men, because few Princes make a War for those Reasons, or upon those Grounds, which they publish in their Declarations; but for others which they think not fit to publish, and so are not capable of being answered. A bare-faced Resolution of doing Wrong, is so impudent a Thing, that no Man dares own it, and therefore a Title must be pretended which is easily answered, by which the Pretences appear to be groundless; whereas the true Reason is an inordinate Appetite of what belongs to another, the Convenience that will redound from his being possessed of it, and a Confidence that he is able to take it from the Owner. And this Men very absurdly and unreasonably would have called Reason of State, to the Discredit of all solid Reason, and all Rules of Probity; as if Reason of State would support Acts of Lying, and of the foulest Dissimulation: Whereas Reason of State, without which Order and Government cannot be preserved, nor no great Action performed, though it results from Notions which are neither common, nor in the View of Standers-by, are yet so solid and conclusive, that when the Time is ripe for communicating them, all Men of Judgment, upon the first View of them, will conclude, that the Action was wise and necessary; and the concealing or disguising of it till the proper Time for Discovery, is the highest Mystery in Policy, and the Quintessence of Reason of State. No unreasonable, no unjust, no wicked Enterprize, ever was, ever can be supported and justified under Pretence of Reason of State.

The Managery of the politick Affairs of this World, is naturally liable to this Want of Ingenuity and of Integrity; which keeps all Questions and Controversies of this Nature from being truly stated, and consequently, from being ever reasonably determined: but how this Mystery of Iniquity comes to introduce itself into Controversies of Religion, upon which the Salvation of Mens Souls depends, in which either Party seldom conceals their true and real Motives (how weak and unreasonable soever) upon which their Opinions are grounded; that Men of equal Learning, equal Integrity, and equal Piety, should differ so diametrically from each other, that they hardly allow a Capacity of Salvation to any Man who is not of their own individual Communion, that is, not of their own Opinion, is worth a serious Enquiry into the true Reason thereof; and, it may be, if the true Reasons were discovered, those Reasons which naturally may prevail upon the Affections, and Judgments, and Minds of Men, the Remedy itself would be easily prescribed: That all the Conferences held, and all the Books written between those of the *Romans* and those of the Reformed Religion, for the Space of above One Hundred and Fifty Years, by Men of unquestionable Knowledge and Virtue, should not work upon any one Man, for ought appears, to change the Opinion he brought with him; for of those who run from one Communion to another, they are such who do not pretend to judge of Arguments, or such who seldom

give an Account of their true Inducements, and others can give the true Reasons from the Course of their Lives, and the Talent of their Understandings, which they can hardly deny though they will never confess: That a Book should be published by those of one Judgment, so clear in Point of Reason, and founded upon such unquestionable Authority, that dispassionate and impartial Men believe to be unanswerable; and that another Book varnished over with new and reproachful Words, without Coherence, and artificially declining and evading the real Subject of the Debate, by being stuffed with light and affected Jest, and reproachful personal Reflections, should be looked upon, even by Men of Parts and well able to distinguish and judge of want of Logick and impertinent Digressions in other Subjects, as full Answers to the other Book; can proceed from nothing but a peevish and froward Resolution to be firm and fixed in the Opinion we have once entertained: as if any Change, or receding from any Thing we have once maintained, were beneath the Temper of a generous Spirit. And when our Reason will not supply us, we fly to our Passion and our Choler; and if we can wound, how lightly and corruptly soever, the Person of our Adversary, we believe we have done our Cause more Right than if we had answered his most weighty Reasons: Whereas in Truth a scurrilous or ungrave handling a serious Controversy in Religion, is almost as great a Scandal to Christianity, as the debating light, frivolous and comical Arguments with Texts of Scripture; and whilst the Truth seems to be contended for, the Fashion and Indecency of it exposes the Dignity of the Subject to Contempt and Derision.

I shall restrain and confine this Disquisition within the Limits of the true and natural Differences between the Church of *England*, and those Enemies thereof, who are the King's own Subjects, of the *Romish* Profession, within his own Dominions; and would examine whether the Case be so rightly and substantially stated between us, in the many very learned Discourses which have been publickly communicated to the View of the World; and whether we have not given them more Advantage than we need to do, by making the Field larger, and comprehending more Particulars as the Subject of our Disputes and Controversies, than are necessary; and do not decline using those Weapons our selves, which are most proper and secure for our Defence, and the most natural and vigorous to subdue or reduce them; and whether the same Method and Temper be the most convenient, and like to be most successful to be still prosecuted by us, which was practised by the gravest and most learned Men in the Beginning of the Reformation. It is not the Purpose, by confining our Discourse within these Bounds, to lay any Imputation or Reproach upon any other Reformed Churches, which have removed themselves from the others Communion. I do not pretend to know their Motives, nor to be enough instructed in the Circumstances of their Separation, much less to censure either; and it may be very lawful and necessary, obstinately to maintain and defend that Truth which Men have fully discovered and are possessed of, though it may be, the Means which were used towards the Discovery, and the Ways by which they came to be possessed of it, were not so justifiable, and that they paid more for the Purchase of it than in Truth it was worth; for there are very few Errors or Corruptions in Christian Religion, that are not in themselves more innocent, or less mischievous, than the Course that is often taken for the Removal and Extirpation of them: but with those I meddle not. It is the Glory of the Church of *England*, that if ever Alteration, and Reformation in Religion or State, was, or ever can be

lawful

lawful; if apparent and gross Errors are not necessary to be always retained, because they have been once received or admitted; it was warrantably done there: Whatever Change hath been made in that Church, was done with all the Deliberation, all the Circumstances of Order, Peace and Authority, that ever hath been held necessary and lawful and justifiable, by the Laws of God and Man; upon the Experience the Nation had long had, of the Mischief of retaining those Burthens and Corruptions which they desired to be freed from; upon Consultation with, and Approbation of the Bishops and Clergy of the Land; upon the Advice and Counsel of the Nobility of the Kingdom, with the Consent and Ratification of the Crown: And in and with this Reformation, whatsoever is of the Essence of Christian Religion, to be believed, of the Duties of Christian Religion prescribed, of the Purity, Order, and Decency instituted or practised by the Rules of the Apostles, and purest and unquestioned Antiquity, is retained and observed with devout Veneration. That a Church thus reformed, and that with such pious Wariness in the Observation, and after a long Expectation of the just Season of its Reformation, and all the Religious Circumstances requisite thereunto; a Church, that chose rather for a long Time to indure many Errors and Corruptions in the Exercise and Worship of the Religion that had been established; and which were for many Ages discovered to be so by many learned Men of that and other Nations, than precipitately to enter upon any Alteration, which might have been attended with such a Concussion in the State, as might have destroyed the Peace and Security thereof; and by a Christian Patience waited God's own Leisure and Direction; and was then so blessed as to abolish nothing that was necessary or fit to be retained, and retained nothing but what was held decent by the most venerable Antiquity: That such a Church should find Opposition, Contradiction and Disobedience from her own Children, or those who should be her Children; that private and particular Persons, who pretend to be subject to the same King, and do enjoy the Benefit and Protection of the same Laws, should presume to revile that Church, and take upon them to declare, that Salvation cannot be had in the Communion thereof; that they should condemn the Laws of their own Country, and under which all their Fellow-Subjects, and by which themselves enjoy all that they have: That they should introduce an Authority and Power superior and above what they acknowledge to be in the King, and which the King cannot controul within his own Dominions: And with these Opinions destructive to Government, and this Practice inconsistent with Peace, that these Men should refuse to give that Security by Oaths and Subscriptions, which all other Subjects give who live in the same Dominions, and all Catholick Subjects submit to under *Roman* Catholick Kings, if required thereunto; this is our just Grievance and Complaint. Nor can we think it reasonable or tolerable, that this Kind of Men should thus superciliously disobey and condemn the Laws of their own Country, upon Pretence of Religion, that neither doth or can oblige them; and which no other *Roman* Catholick Subjects in *Christendom* do insist upon, as shall be made good hereafter: And therefore, when they will not pay the same Subjection to the Government under which they live, which all others do, and by which they would be only obliged that they will not disturb the Publick Peace; it is not to be wondered at, nor complained of, if the State endeavours to provide such Laws and Constitutions, as may keep them from being able to do Mischief to it, be they never so willing.

It is not in our Power to doubt, but that the Church of *England* is legitimately constituted, and founded upon all the Principles of Christianity, which our Saviour himself declared to be the Foundation of his Church; and we are well assured, that it enjoins nothing to be believed or practised which excludes Salvation, nor inhibits any Thing that is necessary to it: which, if true, all Subjects are bound to submit to it, as the Law of their Country, for Conscience-sake. Nor is there any Thing alleged to support this odious Refractoriness, but that there is but one Church, which is the Church of *Rome*; and whosoever is not of that Church, cannot be of a true Church. They had need have a very unquestionable Revelation of the Truth of it, if they have nothing else but this weak Dilemma to support an evident and manifest Disobedience to their King, and the Laws of their Country. What Warrant have any *Englishmen* to pay more Reverence to the Church of *Rome*, than to the Church of *England*? Is it only because that it is the only Christian Church? Christ never allowed himself so little as one Church. We no sooner hear the Name of a Church, than we hear of several Churches, and several Churches which in the newest Infancy of Christianity entertain'd very different and contrary Opinions of Religion; and some of them as dangerous, and of worse Consequence, than any that are at this Day between the *Roman* Catholicks and the Church of *England*. The Apostles themselves were never of one Mind in all Things; St. *Paul* contradicted St. *Peter* to his Face, and pronounced that he was to blame; nor was St. *Peter* behind hand with him, when he declared, *that he had in all his Epistles spoken of many Things, in which are some Things hard to be understood, and so hard, that the unstable and unlearned did wrest (as they did other Scriptures) unto their own Destruction*, 2 Pet. iii. 16. And yet neither the one or the other thought themselves obliged to explain those hard Things, which they knew would require new Explanations when new Questions (to which the new Christians were most inclined) should arise. St. *Paul* would never have directed his several Epistles to the several Churches of the Christians in particular Cities, or of particular Nations, if the Errors in any one (and Errors were in all) made it cease to be a Church. We see how it was when Christianity was first planted, and whilst the first Planters of it were alive; and we have no Reason to believe, when it was farther spread, that ever any two Christian Nations did, or it may be now do, agree in one and the same Opinion and Judgment in all Things which concern the Doctrine of Christ, and his Worship; and God forbid that we should think that there is yet any one Christian Nation in which Christ is not so taught, as that they may not be saved in it. *There is indeed one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism*, Eph. iv. 5. that's true; but where is it said, there is but one Church; which is the Aphorism by which they puzzle weak Men, and put them to enquire which is that Church, that they may talk of Antiquity, and Fathers, and Councils, and Succession, to induce unskilful Men to think theirs to be that one Church; whereas in those Things wherein they differ from the Church of *England*, (I speak for no other Church) they have neither Advantage from Antiquity, from Fathers, from Councils, or from Succession; but on the contrary, in those Particulars have entertained Novelties, Improprieties, and Presumptions, unknown or odious to Antiquity, Fathers and Councils, and which are worthily and warrantably rejected by that excellently Reformed Church.

But is it then in the Power of every Supreme Christian Magistrate and State, under Pretence of Reformation, to alter and change Christian Religion.
and

and the Exercise and Practice of it? No! Nor in the Power of all Christian Magistrates and Christian States together, to alter or change it. What Christ instituted himself, and Christian Religion was instituted by him, no Christian Magistrate pretends, or can have Power to change; the Pope himself, though he hath the Presumption to attempt it, nor General Councils, own or challenge any such Power to themselves: But then we must not call any Thing the Essence of Christian Religion, that is not contained in that his Institution. There are Two Tables in the *New*, as well as in the *Old Testament*; the First contains the Body and Substance of Christian Religion instituted by our Saviour himself, and explained as much as was necessary by his Apostles, and comprehended in few, and plain, and easy Words: *This is the Work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent*, John vi. 29. *If thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy Heart that God hath raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved*, Rom. x. 9. He that heartily believes the Birth, Passion, and Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, hath embraced the whole Body of Christian Religion. And then if he observes the Second Table, as he believes the First, his State of Salvation can never be doubted by himself, nor questioned by any Body else. The Second Table contains those Christian Duties and Practice which result from the Doctrine of the First: *By their Fruits you shall know them; whosoever heareth these Sayings of mine and does them*, says our Saviour, Matt. vii. 20, 24. *Now the Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, against such there is no Law; and they that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts*, Gal. v. 22, 23, 24. These are the Two Tables of Christian Religion, and comprehend all that was instituted by our Saviour, and taught by his Apostles as necessary to Salvation. It was well enough foreseen and known, that there would be Questions and Doubts enough raised upon, and by Occasion of both the First and the Second Table, which began abundantly in the same Time; yet they would neither enlarge the Text, nor the Commentary, but thought they had provided for both, for all that was necessary for their understanding the Interpreting the one, and the Exercise of the other, when they made Obedience to Authority a vital Part of the Religion they prescribed: *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers, for there is no Power but of God; the Powers that be, are ordained of God*, Rom. xiii. 1. *Kings shall be thy Nursing Fathers, and Queens shall be thy Nursing Mothers*, Isa. xlix. 23. which no Body doubts was spoken of the Church; God knowing that he had well provided for the cherishing and establishing the Religion that he meant should be professed in and by his Church, when he enjoined it as a Duty incumbent on them, and the high Office he intrusted them with, to take care and provide for both; and that if they should prove careless or negligent in either, that by no other earthly Means Religion could grow and flourish. Nor did he leave the Supreme Magistrates without Cautions and Instructions how to behave themselves; one of the first of which was, *Foolish and unlearned Questions avoid, knowing that they do gender Strife*, 2 Tim. ii. 23. *Him that is weak in the Faith receive ye, but not to doubtful Disputations; let him not trouble himself, nor do you trouble him with Purgatory, Transubstantiation, nor with Enquiry who is Antichrist: Foolish and unlearned Questions avoid*. Our Saviour himself was the first that discerned and observed that Tares were sown in the Field that he had planted; that false Glosses, and erroneous Interpretations, were already made upon his Actions.

and his Doctrine, yet would not suffer those, though they were his own Disciples who offered, to gather them up: *Nay, lest whilst you gather up the Tares you root up the Wheat also with them; let them both grow together, Mark i. 15.* And because the Time was very long during which he would permit them to grow, and to comfort them against too tender a Sense of Errors and Mistakes, he tells them, That the Foundation which he hath laid, being observed and built upon, (*other Foundation can no Man lay, &c. 1 Cor. iii. 11.*) the Danger would not be great, not so great as to make a publick and general Disturbance in Christian Practice.

Nor could the Petulancy of that Age which presently appeared, in raising Doubts and Disputes upon our Saviour's own Words, and upon what his Apostles delivered as his, dispose them to write Commentaries thereupon; which might put an End to all Disputes and Controversies which might arise, and which they could not but foresee, and in which so much Time hath been since spent, and so much Uncharitableness infused into the Hearts of Men; so that instead of learning more of what Christ would have us know, we have almost unlearned all that he would have us do: Yet St. Paul, as if he foresaw that the original Corruption, and Itch of Knowledge, would be propagated by the Curiosity of Mankind, began his Preaching in his Master's Method, that they might not be terrified with any Imagination of the Difficulty of his Doctrine, he declared, that *that which may be known of God was manifest to them, for God shewed it to them.* There are no doubt many Things fit to be known, and which we should be the better for knowing, which are not so manifest; but it is not so necessary if it be not manifest. And it is very observable, that when he tells them what became of those under the Law, and the Sin of the Gentiles, who did not like to retain God in their Knowledge; he mentions not what false Opinions grew up amongst them, by Reason of their not retention of him in their Knowledge; but that *God gave them over to a reprobate Mind, to do those Things which were not convenient, being filled with all Unrighteousness, Fornication, Wickedness, Covetousness, Maliciousness, full of Envy, Murther, Debate, Deceit, Malignity, Whisperers, Back-biters, Haters of God, despiteful, proud, Boasters, Inventors of evil Things, disobedient to Parents, Rom. i. 29, 30.* He doth not so much as mention their Idolatry in that Place, because it was Matter of Opinion, which was the greatest Contradiction of the Majesty of God; but those Vices, which he had proved destructive to all human Society and Relation. And the same Apostle, finding still that the Infant Christians perplexed themselves with many Difficulties between the Law and the Gospel, took the Pains, as Moses had done to abridge the Obligation of the Law, as was mentioned before, to abridge the Religion of the Gospel: *If thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy Heart that God hath raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved, Rom. x. 9.* He that cordially believes the History of our Saviour; that he was the only begotten Son of God; that he suffered Death for the Sins of Mankind; and that after he was put to Death and buried, he rose the third Day; the Birth, and Death, and Resurrection of Christ; hath Faith sufficient to Salvation, and all that is absolutely necessary to be believed lies within that narrow Compass. Notwithstanding the Clearness of which Definition and Authority of the Apostle, the Wit of Men, and even the Zeal for Religion, produced many Differences of Opinion, and much Faction amongst the Believers; many Men thinking that this excellent Foundation would very well support this Manner of Building; and others, that

would as well and better bear another Sort of Building; rather this Deduction, than that, would result from the same Proposition: St. Paul, still adhering fast to the Foundation without much examining the Superstructures, tells them, *Other Foundation can no Man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*; if they would keep themselves steady to that Foundation, *let their Superstructures be of Gold or Silver, precious Stones, Wood, Hay, or Stubble*, 1 Cor. iii. 11, 12. let their Conceptions or Deductions be of the finest Allay, the more probable and rational, or the more gross and irrational, there will at last be such Examination of every one of them, that the Truth shall appear and be made manifest: but for their Comfort, to abate the Superciliousness of him who hath the most Reason to think himself in the right, and to raise the Spirits of them who may be terrified with the Consequence of being in the wrong, he tells them, that they who have done their Work best, raised such Doctrines upon and from the Foundation, shall bear the Tryal, that Doctrine shall stand, and that they shall receive a Reward; and that they who have built less skilfully, raised Imaginations too large, or contracted Opinions too narrow, to be supported upon that Foundation, their Doctrine shall not subsist, their Opinions shall be disallowed and condemned; yet because they departed not from the Foundation, let their Mistakes and Errors in Judgment be what they will, they themselves shall be saved: Nor did he think the Determination of those Buildings, how different soever and vile the Materials might seem to be, were proper for the Judgment of any but the Master-BUILDER, the Architect who had directed the Foundation, who could only judge whether there were Malice or Hypocrisy in preparing such Superstructures to rest upon that Foundation.

Therefore judge nothing before the Time till the Lord come, 1 Cor. iv. 5. Whosoever takes upon him to be a Judge before, presumes to Judge before the Cause is ripe for Judgment; which is not only beside the Office of an upright Judge, but against the Rules of Justice. And it was very good Husbandry, as well as Wisdom, in the Master in the Parable; who, though he saw the Tares not grown up by chance, out of the Rankness of the Soil, but Tares maliciously and industriously sown by the Labour and Craft of an Enemy, would not suffer his active Servants to pull them up; he rejected that Providence, *nay, lest while you gather up the Tares you root up the Wheat also with them; let them both grow until the Harvest*, Matt. xiii. 29, 30. And lest Men should think by the Ripeness of the Tares, the Harvest was come, our Saviour himself interprets his own Parable, *The Harvest is the End of the World, and the Reapers are the Angels*. An unskilful Hand will mistake the Wheat for Tares, and a rude passionate Hand will pull up both, that he may be sure he hath destroyed one. Unskilful and unlearned Men may believe that to be an Error, which in truth is none, but enough consistent with the Truth; and angry Men will not enough consider if it be in truth an Error, what Root it may have taken from some unquestionable Truth, and how far it may have insinuated itself into the Minds of good and pious Men, which ought to be undeceived by Application and gentle Remedies, and by Time; but will violently tear it from the hold it had, and make a greater Wound than they found, disturb the Peace of a Kingdom, rather than connive at an Error till it be ripe, and the Mischief thereof fully discovered; and when the Malice of the Disease is evident, proportionable Remedies may more easily be found. Our Saviour was not more careful of the Season than of the Reapers; *The Season is the End of the World, the Reapers are the Angels*;

Angels; dispassionate and impartial Reapers, who understand the Nature of the Tares, and the hurt they have done to the Corn. It is a Complaint and Observation as antient as St. Gregory, Li. Ep. 39. *Quam multi sunt fideles qui imperito zelo succenduntur, & sæpe dum quosdam quasi hereticos insequuntur, hæreses faciunt*; Charity and Discretion can only preserve Men from splitting on the Rocks, and the Time prescribed in the Parable can only determine all Disputations.

It seems an Expression of a wonderful Latitude which St. Paul uses in the *Philippians*, i. 15, 18. *Some indeed preach Christ even of Envy and Strife, and some also of good Will. What then? notwithstanding in every way, whether in Pretence or in Truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.* St. Paul found Opposition and Contention (as all other Preachers have done since) even from some other Apostles and Disciples; Emulation was a strong Passion, and well grown in the Infancy of the Church, and did no great Harm, no doubt. St. Paul wished that all who preached Christ had had the same Thoughts, and had used the same Words, and had had the same Affection towards each other; which Unity would have advanced the Propagation of Christianity: but he knew that was impossible, and that different Apprehensions and different Conceptions must always be attended with difference of Expressions. Whilst the Birth, and Life, and Death, and Resurrection of Christ was taught, though they which preached him had their own Passions and Prejudices towards each other, he was still glad that the Number of Christians was increased. There may be much Good done in the World, without taking its rise purely from Conscience, and only to please others, or to imitate others; and the like may be done to anger, and cross, and contradict other Men; and though the Authors of that Good have lost their Reward, yet there is matter of Rejoicing still that Good is done. It is very well worth our Reflection, how little Pains our Saviour took (who well foresaw what Disputations would arise concerning Religion to the End of the World) to explain any doctrinal Parts, or indeed to institute any thing of speculative Doctrine, in his Sermon upon the Mount; which comprehends all Christianity; but to resolve all into Practice: And his Apostles, though they met with a world of Questions and Disputes, and in the highest Points of the Mystery of Religion, were very short in their Answers and Determinations, and left no room for any Contention in the Understanding upon any Matter of Faith, it depending purely upon believing what was past and done, and of which they received unquestionable Evidence; but in the Application of this Faith to Practice, they were large in their Discourses, and clear to remove all Doubts: they had observed into how many Schisms and Sects the Church of the *Jews* had run, by their several Interpretations of the Law and the Prophets, of both which they had all equal Veneration, and from both gathered Arguments enough to found an Animosity against each other, that vented it self in all the Acts of Uncharitableness, and Denunciation of Hell-Fire to their Opponents; and they did all they could that the Gospel and Professors thereof might not be exposed to the like Mischiefs by the same Disputation. Men might set their Wits on work to raise Doubts and Scruples, and improve them to what Degree they please by the Subtlety of their own Invention; they were Difficulties of their own making, not finding: Christ and his Apostles left their Declaration of what we are to believe, and what we are to do, so clearly stated, that we cannot dangerously mistake; and so much the more clearly, by informing us what we are not to believe, and what we are not to do, by the Obligation

tion of Christianity; and as they did no doubt foresee the Wilfulness and Weakness of the succeeding Times, and that Men would make use of the Scriptures themselves to the Prejudice of Religion, they took care they might know there is much in them above their Understanding, and that they should govern themselves by what is plain and easy to be understood therein; and above all, that they should not presume to censure and judge those who differ from them in their Opinions, because Christ hath reserved all those Differences to be determined by himself. These are the Cautions and Instructions which he hath left to those, who are constituted by him his Supervisors of his Church; the last of which is, *Whatsoever Things are true, whatsoever Things are honest, whatsoever Things are just, whatsoever Things are pure, whatsoever Things are lovely, whatsoever Things are of good Report, if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praise, think on these Things.* That Nation that keeps it self fast upon this Foundation, observes these Cautions and Instructions in the providing for the Information and Practice of Religion within themselves, ought to be obeyed and submitted to by the People that are under them, as if their Dictates were literally included in the Scripture it self; and therefore the Church of England, that hath proceeded in this Method, and by these Cautions and Restrictions in the Reformation it hath made, complains justly of those who ought to be her Children, and refuse to yield Obedience to her, because she hath not the Approbation of a foreign Magistrate, who (how powerful soever he may be in his own and in other Dominions) hath not Authority in *England*, nor over their Persons who are Subjects to another Prince, nor ever had till he was called and admitted to a limited Jurisdiction, which from Time to Time was restrained or enlarged as the Wisdom of the State thought convenient in the most Catholick Times, and was at last by the same Consent and Judgment utterly abolished by a Catholick King, Catholick Clergy, and Catholick People, before the Reformation.

How assured soever the Church of *England* is in all that she hath done or consented to, it hath observed likewise the Modesty prescribed by the apostle, *To judge nothing before the Time*, that concerns others: It condemns no Body over whom it has no just Authority; it does not look upon it self as an Evangelist sent to reform other Churches, or to censure and determine, that the Opinions which they hold and believe do exclude them from Salvation; it meddles not with determining who is Anti-Christ, nor with Purgatory or Transubstantiation, as they are stated by other Churches. Indeed, those Opinions are rejected and censured by the Church in her own Children, or in those who ought to submit to her Conclusions; and even in those, it doth not make those Opinions to be damnable, lest it might seem to condemn all who hold the same; which is the unwarrantable Presumption that it complains of in the Church of *Rome*. And if that Church duly considered in how many of the most important Articles of Religion, the Church of *England* agrees with her; and in how few she differs, and those very modernly enjoined, (if not received) as Conditions of Salvation by her; and if it had not more of the Artifice and the Policy of the Court, than of the Wisdom and Piety of the Church, it would not presume for those few Particulars to exclude a much greater Number of Christians from any Hope of Salvation, if her Vote could exclude them, than are contained within the Pale of that Church by her own Computation and Geography; and when many of those whom she will needs reckon as her own, differ from her, and renounce a Subjection to her in those Particulars which she reckons as Fundamental as any upon which

which the Church of *England* dissents with her, as shall be made manifest in this Discourse. But it is yet more strange, that she should apply the Humility and Charity of our Church, (that *Charity that covers a Multitude of Sins*, and is the very Essence and Soul of Christianity it self) because we extend it as far as possibly it will reach on their Behalf, in the Hope that they may be saved, as an Argument against us, and to induce us to decline our own Church and to betake us to their Communion, because they have the Presumption and Impudence to conclude that we cannot otherwise be saved. But this must not alter our Temper: They cannot provoke the Church of *England*, by their uncharitable and rash Precepts, nor by their furious Example, to say worse of Purgatory, Worshipping and Adoration of Images, and Invocation of Saints, than that the *Romish* Doctrine concerning Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping and Adoration as well of Images as of Relicks, and also Invocation of Saints, is a fond Thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no Warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God. These are the Words, and all the Judgment that the Church of *England* hath declared upon those Particulars in the Two and Twentieth Article. We pronounce no Anathema against those who are of another Profession, but are well content that those Tares shall grow till the Harvest. In the Argument of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the Church of *England* prescribes and enjoins the same Reflections, the same Recollections, the same Piety and the same Devotion, which the other Church pretends to commend; it administers it in the same Words in which our Saviour instituted it; pronounces the same Benefit and Reward to those who receive it worthily, and the same insupportable Penalties to those who unworthily partake of it, as the other Church does, and which was as much as the Catholick Church enjoined for a Thousand Years after our Saviour. And for the other irrational Innovation, the New Term of *Transubstantiation*, that hath introduced with it all the cholerick and uncharitable Terms, and a new rude Language into all Debates of Religion; the Church of *England* pronounces no more, than, that Transubstantiation (or the Change of the Substance of Bread and Wine) in the Supper of the Lord cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain Words of Scripture, overthroweth the Nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many Superstitions. These are the Words of the Eight and Twentieth Article; and all other Censures and Reproaches, which by the warmth of Contention are cast upon these Particulars, or the Persons who own those Doctrines, are not the Language of the Church of *England*, which is guided by a much gentler Spirit; let them who think otherwise, stand or fall to their own Master.

It cannot be wondered at, nor need it be excused, that in the Beginning of the Reformation, (which happened in or near the same Time in several Kingdoms and Provinces, though God knows upon very different Occasions, and carried on with very different Circumstances) the Novelties introduced, which are always odious in Religion; and the horrible Outrages which in many Places were committed, when all Kinds of Prophaneness were applied to the removing some Kind of Superstitions; and the foul Pretence of Conscience made use of to pull down Churches, and interrupt all Exercise of Religion, to withdraw all Duty and Obedience from Kings and Princes, and to condemn all Laws and Government; when Armies were raised, Battles fought, the most execrable Murthers committed, and all the Licence and Excess that Fire and Sword could commit, were practised for Religion-sake: I say, I do not wonder that the Church and Court of *Rome*

Rome (to whom all these People, and all these Nations had before submitted) was so much transported, as to throw about all their Wild-fire promiscuously amongst them all, and to use all the Reproaches and ill Words against them all, which they had been accustomed to when they had been worse used and affronted, without examining the Difference in Substance and Circumstance that was in the Proceedings in the several Climates; and rather satisfying themselves that the Submission and Obedience that had been formerly paid to them was but their due, than enquiring how it came to be so: And thus very pious and learned Men, who lived under that Jurisdiction, thought it necessary to condemn all the Actions which were done, and all the Doctrines which were taught by some or all of them, with equal Bitterness and Animosity. This Rage was encountred with the like Passion by many worthy Men of the Reformation; who were not content with declining the Authority that the other had usurped, and discovering those Errors which the other countenanced and defended, but would extend their Errors to such a Magnitude, as if it defaced, if not totally covered all kind of Truth, and remained not only an erroneous Church, but no Church in which Men could be saved: And so, as Men who find themselves unwarily in a Place of Contention, where no other Weapons are used but Stones and Brick-bats, think they are not safe by standing in a grave Posture, except they defend themselves by the same Artillery; so, many good Men, who by calm reasoning could well have justified all that they had done or submitted to, when they found themselves assaulted with the same Reproaches of Schismatick, Heretick and Apostate, that Men who were not innocent underwent, and that the same Rules of Excommunication, Interdiction and Deprivation issued against the One and the Other, by which Subjects were incited to open Rebellion against their lawful Sovereign, and absolved from all the Oaths and Obligations they were bound by to God and Man, which introduced all imaginable Confusion in Church and State, except those Firebrands were extinguished in Contempt, and thrown back into the Enemy's Quarters; and so Anti-Christ and Idolater, and the other most opprobrious Terms which the Anger and Malice of any Party administered, were thrown at their Heads again, and such Arms applied by all Parties to repel them, as were supplied out of all Mens Store as if the Cause were the same, and which were not provided out of their own Magazines.

Time, Observation and Experience, with the Event of Things, quickly wrought upon the Hearts of all Catholick Kings and Princes, made them discern that these Animosities were not warrantable towards all they had been directed against, and that therein they had play'd another Man's Game, and advanced his Interest and not their own; they observed Reformation in the Church, which they all long'd for, and had long importuned might be brought to pass without Rebellion, or any Disorder in the State, and that what their Subjects had done against them, and in their Dominions, had no Warrant from, or Coherence with what had been solemnly transacted in *England*, and settled and established by the Laws of that Kingdom; and thereupon, they all made haste to renew their Alliance with the Crown of *England*, as independent upon all other earthly Power, and which ought not to be controled by them: And *Charles* the Fifth himself, who provoked and compelled that weak and irresolute Pope, *Clement* the Seventh, to issue out that Excommunication against *Henry* the Eighth, which all good Catholicks lament and abhor, as a rash, unjust and unwarrantable Action, had no sooner forced him to commit that Outrage for
the

the Benefit of his own private and politick Affairs, but he entred into a stricter Alliance and League with that very Prince, than had ever before been between them; and since that Time all Catholick Princes live with the same Amity and Commerce, in the same Alliance, Friendship and Confederacy towards all Protestant Kings, and Princes, and States, as they do towards each other; which they could not do, if they believed the Pope's Power of Excommunication to be a Catholick Verity, and derived to him by a particular Grant from Christ himself: They all know, that all those cholerick Words, of Heretick, Schismatick, and Apostate, are Terms of Art which need no Definition, not Terms of Religion, which ought to be generally discussed, and understood; they know well, that the Pope's Bulls, Artillery and Cannon, would neither wound, nor hurt, nor terrify, if they were not stuffed and charged with those Kinds of Ammunition: *France* knows, that none of their most Catholick Kings were ever excommunicated, but that they were also declared to be Hereticks, Schismaticks, and Apostates; and *Spain* knows, that none of their Kings of *Arragon* or *Castile* were ever excommunicated, but Heresy, Schism and Apostacy was laid to their Charge, as the greatest Ingredient into their Crimes, how great Enemies soever they were to either: *Germany* was well acquainted with that Form of Speaking, when the Emperors contested any of their Sovereign Rights with the Bishop of *Rome*, that they had a mind to take from them, before *Luther* put the Pope into Choler; and *Italy* knows well, that the Republick of *Venice* underwent all those Reproaches, because it would maintain and defend its own Sovereignty against the Tyranny and Claim of the Pope, when there was no other Religion permitted to be exercised in their Dominions than the *Roman*, and the Cruzado itself was ready to be granted against them in as ample and terrible a Form as ever it was denounced against the *Turk* or *Mahometan*: If the Duke of *Modena* will challenge a Right to *Ferrara* or *Bologna*, or the Duke of *Parma* to *Castro*, they shall be as much Hereticks, Schismaticks, and Apostates, by the Judgment of the Pope, as ever *Luther* or *Calvin* were: Therefore all Catholick Princes, if they are not swayed by some Temporal Interest of their own, leave the Pope to prosecute that War, and to fight those Battles which he engages himself in, upon the Quarrel of Religion, by his own Soldiers and Schoolmen,

After the first violent Heat and Fury was over, the Contentions upon Matters of Religion were handled with much more Temper and Moderation by the learned Men on both Sides, than it had formerly been; as if they believed those Controversies were fitter to be debated and decided in the Schools than in the Camp: and if any seditious Doctrines or indecent Expressions were published by Men of fiery and unpeaceable Constitutions, both Sides disowned and disavowed them, as the Presumption of particular Men, and not the Judgment of the Church of which they pretended to be; and many Times the Catholick Doctors censured and condemned them with the same Zeal the Protestant Doctors did. The Church of *England* forbore to interpose and meddle with what related to others, not themselves; and what particular learned Men thought necessary to say upon occasional Vindications, was for the most Part done with more Modesty and Candour; and it thought it seasonable to discontinue those Paper-Skirmishes, till Men temperately might reflect upon what was good in either Religion, as well as enquire into their Defects and Excesses; and to leave the Wisdom of the State to provide for the best Vindication of their own Constitutions and Injunctions, and the reducing the Subjects to Obedience and Sub-

Submission. The Pope and Court of *Rome* it self grew much more gentle and Neighbourly, and chose rather to censure and reproach the rough and imperious Natures of their *Clements*, and their *Gregories*, and the like, than to imitate them; all Liberty and Conversation is permitted and cherished towards all Men of what Religion soever; there is no Heretick in *Rome*, whatever he is in his own Country: Nay, the very Inquisition, that severely chastises the *Italians* upon any Extravagance of Opinion, presumes not to question an *Englishman* or a *Dutchman*, though he should say that the Pope is Anti-Christ; *Rome* is equally their Country to preserve their Liberty, and to preserve them from Injury and Affronts, as *London* or the *Hague* is: No more talk of Excommunications and Deprivations; and though they as heartily wish that all the Doctrines taught by *Bellarmino*, *Mariana*, and their Companions, were as generally believed as they are by themselves; yet they will not seem to own, but rather to disavow them, and prudently chuse to conceal those Fireworks, and to shut up those Mortar-pieces and Granadoes in the dark Vaults and Cellars of the Castle of *St. Angelo*, than to awaken the Jealousy of Princes, by exposing them to their View, till the World shall be more infatuated than it is at present: And they know well, that all those Poisons have still as much Force which were compounded by *Pius*, and *Sixtus*, and *Gregory* the Thirteenth, as if they had been newly renewed and prescribed by *Urban* and *Innocent*, and those who have succeeded them. And they have gotten very much by this agreeable Temper; and their modern Humanity hath contributed much to the not Enquiry into, and the Censure of their unwarrantable Divinity; and if it were not for the unnatural Distance that Court keeps from all Protestant Kings and Princes, and for which all Catholick Princes laugh at them; by not sending to, or receiving from them Ambassadors and Publick Ministers, which the Law of Nations requires as necessary for Traffick and Commerce; the Pope and all Protestant Princes, *Rome* and *Geneva*, would live in so good Correspondence and Charity towards each other, that they would confess that they are all Christians, and be content that our Saviour himself should judge which of them endeavours best to observe his Precepts and follow his Example.

It is a great Pity that the unquiet and ungrateful Humour and Temper of some of the *Roman* Party, very much to the Displeasure of all peaceable and well-affected Catholicks, should by their virulent and seditious Writings renew again that bitter and reproachful Spirit, that for some time seemed to be declined, if not better composed; and as much as in them lies, sharpen the Edge and awaken the Rigour of those Laws, which would quickly put an end to their Insolence and Sedition, and which are charitably laid asleep, to try if they will make themselves worthy or capable of that Charity. It must be the pernicious Influence of their evil Angel, that transports Men who enjoy the Protection of a Protestant Prince and State, to have the Benefit of all Laws which can be applied to their Favour, and the Indulgence of those Laws which are purposely made against them, who are by the Lenity and Charity of the Church connived at from paying those Penalties which might be exacted from them, who are not called in Question, and prosecuted for their secret Malice and Combinations; and yet in all this Quiet and Tranquility cannot forbear publickly and avowedly to traduce and reproach this Church and State, and to declare that all who live and die in the Communion thereof are incapable of Salvation; and therefore refuse to pay that Subjection and Obedience to either, which the Laws require, and profess to have a Dependence upon a Foreign Prince

and Power, and refuse to give Security, or to declare that Foreign Power cannot apply them against the Happiness and Peace of that State; That Men, who have no other Title or Pretence to come into the Kingdom, or to remain there, but their being sent by the Authority of him who hath absolved all Subjects from their Obedience to the Crown, and declared all the Oaths by which they are obliged to it to be void; (for all those Bulls are, in the Judgment of that Church, in as full Vigour as they were the first Day they were published :) I say, That these Men should in all their Discourses, and in Print, in this Manner renounce and defy both Church and State, and be only looked upon and considered as conscientious Catholics, who are inevitably bound by the Principles of their Religion to undergo all these Hazards and Dangers, and to lay down their Lives, for the Truth, is so stupendious a Presumption on the one Hand, and Toleration on the other, that neither Christian Charity nor Christian Policy requires or permits; and for which great Mischief may be undergone and sustained: And no doubt this Mischief is very much improved, in that these Men meet with no opposition, find no contradiction but upon those Particulars, which equally concerns all who communicate with the Church of *Rome*, and are vital Branches of their Religion. Learned Men look upon it only as a Contest in Religion, and think whatever is of State in it should be considered and treated by other more competent Doctors; they hope to withdraw the Reverence of the People from the Pope, by finding out Arguments that he is Anti-Christ; and since the Charity of the Church of *England* (which cannot be abolished or lessened by any Passion of theirs) hath wrought so contrary Effects, they think it just to pay them in their own Coin; and so they take great Pains to make it believed, that the very Principles of their Religion, their Opinion of Purgatory, of Transubstantiation, of Images, and other Particulars, are not consistent with their Salvation; that the Worship they pay to Images, and the Adoration which they practise in the Eucharist, is formal Idolatry, against which God himself hath denounced and executed so many terrible Judgments, and which excludes them from any Hope of Heaven.

It may be, some learned Men of the present Age, upon the Provocation they have received from their confident Adversaries, who would persuade the World, that all the Opinions of the present *Roman* Church are the same, and no other than have been held from our Saviour's Time, have handled and enlarged upon those Particulars, with much more Clearness and Evidence, than hath been done before; and beaten them from some Fortresses, which heretofore they defended more obstinately; so that Infallibility is either quite deserted by them, or there is a Difference between themselves where it resides; and possibly more hath been said towards the evincing these last mentioned Particulars, than they will be able to answer: Yet, I say, let what is urged be true or not true, it is not the Method that is necessary to reform and convert those against whom it is urged, and increases the Prejudice against the Church of *England*, and the Number of its Enemies, who find the War brought into their Quarters, and the Church of *England* the Aggressor, as if it would drive them from all those Doctrines which constitute their Religion: Whereas we have nothing to say against the *Roman* Catholick Subjects of the King's Dominions, but what doth distinguish them from all other Catholics, who may be innocent, and possibly in the right, when the other are criminal, and apparently in the wrong. Why should we contribute to their Strength, by making the Case conformable to that of all other Catholics? and that ought to convince and convert those

those in *England*, which hath no Force with the *French* or the *Spaniard*. I know not how it comes to pass, but a Man who would in his Discourse seriously mention the Policy of Religion, and Religion of State, must be very wary in his Expressions, to escape the Censure of being without Religion; nor can there be a more opprobrious Thing to Christianity, than the customary Profession of many young and loose Men, that they are and will be of the King's Religion, when in truth they have no other Notion of Religion than by going to Church at the Hours and Times appointed; and it is not strange, that such Christians are easily induced to quit that Church they were going to, for another in which they may find more Company: Yet this Distinction being well understood (as it is worthy to be) would be the best Expedient to reconcile many great Controversies, since, as hath been said before, there be very few Christian Churches in the World, which, in the Exercise of Religion and the Worship of God, do not govern themselves by some Rules, and practise many Things, which have no other Foundation than the Constitution and Prescription of the Government under which they live, and in the Determination whereof they acquiesce with Innocence and Tranquility. If I endeavoured to convert a *French* Catholick, who understood as much of his Religion as most of them do, and would hear me with more Patience and Attention than any of them are naturally inclined to, and would begin with that which is the monstrous Corruption in Religion, and the Cause of most of the rest, and hath the least Foundation in Religion, the Power of the Pope, and should make it manifest that he hath no Authority derived to him in Scripture, nor Submission paid to him by Antiquity; when his Usurpation begun, and how it was improved by the foulest Acts and Arts that have ever been invented; and therefore how dishonourable it is for *France*, and insecure for himself, to be imposed upon in Matters of Fact by his Dictates; he answers me very roundly, that *France* neither submits to, or considers his Dictates, otherwise than as they are agreeable to their own Sentiments, and he makes it evident to me by the Arrests of State, and the Determinations of the *Sorbonne* in Matters of Religion, and the King's Supremacy, above any Power or Jurisdiction of his; that for himself he pays no other Reverence or Submission to the Pope, than he is enjoined to do by the Laws of his Country, the Reason whereof it becomes not him to dispute; and that if his King will command it, he, and all other good Catholicks of *France*, will march with an Army to the Sacking of *Rome*, and be as ready to besiege him in his Castle of St. *Angelo*, as ever the Catholick Duke of *Bourbon* performed that Enterprize; and you may believe him, nor can I press him farther upon that Particular.

If I proceed with him to the Matter of Purgatory, and convince him that it hath no Ground in Scripture, and may to learned and inquisitive Men appear to be contrary to Scripture; that it is an Opinion unreasonable, and though it hath some Countenance in Antiquity, yet when it had most, the contrary was entertained, and supported by as learned Men; the Wisdom of the Church leaving Men the liberty of thinking, as was most agreeable to their own Judgments: but that it is a most insupportable Tyranny in the Church of *Rome*, of which he is a Member, to exclude me from that Communion, if I cannot believe it to be what that hath determined, and declare that I am damned if I do not believe it; and then the Ways prescribed to get from thence, are such as appear ridiculous to any sober Enquirer: To all which he answers me frankly, That he never told his Confessor what his Opinion is of Purgatory, nor did his Confessor ever ask

ask him what he thought of it, and if he should, he is not bound to answer him; he is not furnished with Reason enough to speak against it, and that serves his Turn; and he is the less inquisitive what in Truth it is, because they who are most against it do not determine where the Soul is, at least the full State of its Happiness or Unhappiness, from the Time of its Separation from the Body to the Day of Judgment; and he hath heard, that for many Hundred Years after our Saviour's Time, it was generally believed that the Soul was shut up in some secret Place of Rest and Acquiescence, there to remain till the Last Day; and therefore since the Doctors differ so much in Opinion of the Place, he thinks fit rather to conform (without farther Enquiry) to the Judgment of the Church and State under which he lives, than to perplex himself with the several Disputes about it, and of which he doth not think himself a competent Judge. In the mean Time he is well assured, that if he takes that Care of his Soul that he ought to do whilst it is in this World, God Almighty will provide for it sufficiently in the next, and to him he will leave it.

I promise myself more Advantage against him in the next Argument; and tell him first of the Impertinency of the Invocation of Saints, who can neither hear him, nor do him any Good; and that if they could, it is so much Labour lost, because he might more warrantably apply himself to our Saviour himself, who expects it, and who no body doubts can satisfy all his Requests and Desires. I tell him of the Stupidity of worshipping and adoring a Board, or a Stone, upon which there is engraven the imaginary Image or Portraiture of our blessed Virgin, or some other Saint as senseless as the Board or Stone itself, which is no less than a Breach of the second Commandment, and direct Idolatry: That in the most vital Part of Christian Religion, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which he hath commanded us to celebrate in Remembrance of him, and as the greatest Earnest he hath left us of our Salvation by his Death and Passion, the Church of which he is a Member defrauds him, and denies to administer to him more than half of what Christ himself instituted; and enjoins him to believe that a Piece of Bread or Wafer is the real Flesh and Blood of our Saviour himself, and therefore to pay Adoration to him accordingly; which is impossible for him to believe, since his Sense controls and contradicts that Imagination; and his Eyes and his Taste convinces him in the Instant that he received it, that there is neither Flesh nor Blood in it, but that it remains still Bread as before; and though our Religion obliges us to believe many Particulars which exceed our Sense and our Reason, yet it obliges us not to believe any thing as an Article of our Faith, that our Sense can contradict: nor did our Saviour ever work any Miracle which he did not submit to the Examination of the Sense; when he turned the Water into Wine, he submitted it to the Taste of the Company, and if the Guest had not given it the Testimony of being the best Wine, better than the former, he did not expect that it should be believed to be Wine, because he bid it to be poured out; when he multiplied the Loaves and the Fishes, if so many Thousand hungry People had not eaten and been satisfied, and with their Eyes seen more Baskets full left, than all that had been brought before them contained, he would never have expected that they should have believed the Miracle; the Dead whom he raised, he did not by some easy Motion remove from the Eyes of the Spectators, but exposed them to the Examination and Conversation of the Company, they saw the same Persons walk, and heard them speak, whom they had seen dead and buried: that these Things were done, they saw; how they came to be done, they

they could not comprehend, and therefore concluded that they was done by Divine Power : He made the Sense judge of the Religion he meant to establish, and his very Passion and Resurrection the Subject and the Object of Mens Senses ; and his Disciples made it the chief Argument to procure their Doctrine to be believed, because what they preached was Matter of Fact, and contained nothing but what themselves and a Multitude of other Witnesses had seen with their Eyes, and heard with their Ears : And therefore, to require any Man to say he believes a Thing to be any thing but what it appears to his Sense to be, but what his Eyes see it to be, when it is a bodily Object, or cannot say that it is not, is not consistent with Truth ; and to adore that for the very Person of our Saviour, which (besides all the other gross Contradictions which Nature and Reason suggests) my Eyes see and plainly discern to be an inanimate Creature, is so inconsistent with Religion, that it seems to contain the greatest Marks and even the Essence of the most gross Idolatry ; and therefore, though there should be no other Reason for it, than those Impieties of worshipping Images, and Adoration of the Eucharist, it cannot be safe to remain in the Communion of that Church, where both these Doctrines are taught, and required to be believed.

To all these Particulars, he answers me with less Passion than I have provoked him with ; That he confesses that I have spoken like a Man who believes himself, and who hath received other Notions of Religion than he hath been acquainted with ; but that nothing I have said hath convinced him, but that he may safely remain in that Church in which he hath been bred, and subject to that Authority under which he hath been born. He doth assure me, that he never worshipped or prayed unto any Piece of Wood or Stone in his Life, nor was ever advised so to do, nor doth believe that any Paint or Portraiture with which they are adorned can make them more sensible than they were before : That the Church and the State, of which he is, recommends such Representations to him, as good Occasions and Opportunities to recollect himself ; and to pay some Devotion to those Saints and holy Persons, that they may be propitious to him, who are in that Manner represented ; and therefore, that he sometimes kneels before them, fixing the Eyes of his Mind with more Reverence upon the singular Virtue and Merit of those excellent Persons, than those of his Body upon the Representation. Whether those blessed Spirits can see his Devotions, or contribute towards the granting his Requests, he enquires not ; nor as he is not secure they do, so he cannot be sure they cannot ; and he doth not hear that those Churches which have excluded Saints and Angels from any Part of their Devotions, have assigned them any other Offices or Employment ; and therefore he is not willing to think them absolutely idle and useless. For his being suffered to receive the Sacrament but in one Kind, he will not undertake to answer my Argument, because he hath heard many learned Catholicks wish, that it were universally administered in both Kinds : But it is not in his Power to believe, that his Church, which is under the Government and Protection of the most Christian King, and the Clergy whereof consists of so many Bishops and others of the most profound Learning, and confessed Piety and Virtue, would conspire together to defraud the Members of it of Half their Hopes of Salvation, if they did not know that the Half that is assigned to them did contain as much, and as well secure them, as the Whole that was instituted by our Saviour ; and he can less believe that his and so many other Christian Churches, that are of the same Communion, would introduce or permit

mit the Exercise of any Posture in their Devotion, that may fall under the least probable Reproach of Idolatry; which no private particular Christian, much less a Christian Church, can be guilty of. That for the Matter of the Sacrament, he hath heard that it is administred in the same Manner, and in the same Words, by the Authority of that Church of which I am, as it is in theirs; and that for his Part, he approaches to the Solemnity of it with that Reverence, and using those Postures as are prescribed to him by his Church, and he is sure without the least Thought or idolatrous Imagination in his Heart; and if less than is his due is administred to him in that high Mystery, it is not his Fault; and he is very confident, that if he receives that which is allowed him, with that Penitence, Devotion and Resolution he ought to do, it will be as beneficial to him as the Whole would be; and without that both would increase his Damnation. He says, he is so far from trusting his own Eyes or Taste in the Inquisition when he receives it, that his Eyes are always shut; and what he takes he swallows, that no Scruple may arise in him that it is any Thing but that it is given him for: And that the Objections I have offered against what so many learned and godly Men believe, make the less Impression on him, because those Churches which reject it, and agree together upon what it is not, are again as much divided upon what it is; and that the Church of *England* it self, which hath most endeavoured to keep up the Integrity of the first Institution, seems to think that there is more in the Eucharist after Consecration than was before, or than meer Bread and Wine, and yet doth not expresse how the Senses shall discern that Difference and Alteration; and other Churches so much undervalue the Use both of that and the Sacrament of Baptism, and have so little Reverence for them, or Opinion of the Validity and Benefit of them, that they neither suffer the one or the other to be carried to those who cannot fetch them; and the Child that is ready to expire shall not be baptized if he be not carried to Church, and the infirmest Man who hath not Strength to go out of his Bed, shall die without the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, how much soever he desires it, because he is not strong enough to go to the Place where it is usually celebrated. And thereupon he asks me, Whether I do not think that in Matters of this high Importance he were not better conform himself to the Example and Precepts of those whom he ought to obey and imitate, than upon plausible Arguments which he cannot answer, change his Religion, upon the Authority of a Church to which he owes no Subjection or Obedience? Nay, he requires me to deal freely with him, Whether I would advise him, admitting that he was so far converted by my Arguments, as to believe that Purgatory is but a vain Imagination; and that Pictures and Images ought to be removed, for the Scandal they may give to many, and the no Benefit that can accrue from them; that the Communion in both Kinds ought to be administred to him and to all the People; and that the Element of Bread remains still after the Consecration: Whether, I say, I would advise him rather, upon all this, to renounce the Communion of that Church in which he hath been bred, and his Subjection to those Laws and that Magistracy under which he hath been born; which must naturally be attended with the withdrawing that Protection from him, and exposing him to the Censure of those Laws; or rather to suspend any such Resolution, and to live quietly and honestly under the same Government, performing all those Actions of a pious Life which are agreeable to the Doctrine of that Church, and most acceptable to God Almighty, until it shall please him so far to enlighten that Church and State, that all those Particulars

culars may be reformed or abolished? I know not what another Man more enlightened might reply to such a Person, and in such a Case; but I confess for my self, purely for want of those Arguments which arise from the Religion of State, (for Education and Laws constitute Religion of State) and are in Conscience convincing, I know not what to reply; nor should dare advise him, for his Soul's Health, to leave that as a Church where he cannot be saved, or to expose his Life, Family and Fortune to certain Ruin and Destruction, upon no better Arguments than those which I could offer to him.

If it be then no easy Thing to convert a Man, and to persuade him to change his Religion, in which he is supported and fortified by the Practice and Laws of his Country; not but that they may be erroneous, but are not naturally made appear to him to be so; nor if they did, is he qualified to reverse or alter them; what then must the greatest Princes of *Europe* think, the Emperor, the Kings of *France* and *Spain*, of *Poland*, and many of the Princes of *Germany*, and all of *Italy*, when they find themselves charged with living in a Communion in which Anti-Christ resides and governs; that in the very Exercise of their Religion, which so many Hundred Years has been practised and established amongst them, and in which so many Persons illustrious for their Learning and Piety have lived and died with great Glory, they are gross Idolaters, against whom all the Judgments of the *Old* and *New Testament* are pronounced? Would they not reasonably think that they may lawfully join together to root out a Church or a Nation, that shall take upon it the Presumption to make any such Declaration? And if it do not become a National Church to do it, (God be thanked the Church of *England* gives not any Countenance to such Presumption) methinks particular Men should not take upon them to determine such high Mysteries, which God himself hath not revealed. If Men will think it necessary to discover and find out who is Anti-Christ, let them enquire by St. *John's* Definition of him, *He is Anti-Christ that denieth the Father and the Son*, 1 *John* ii. 23. and that Apostle will tell him *there are many Anti-Christ's*. Let them be directed by plain and evident Places of Scripture, and by the clear Description of the Spirit of God, before they undertake to fasten that burning Brand to any particular Person; who, if they say true, must undergo those endless Torments, the Thought whereof makes all good Men tremble. They who will presume to make a Key to God's own Cypher, may as reasonably make any Lord or Lady whom they do not love, to be Anti-Christ, as they who, out of *Ezekiel* and *Daniel* and the *Revelation*, have discovered the Pope to be him, when neither of those Prophets themselves knew who he was, or who he was to be: And it is some Judgment upon those inquisitive Persons, that many of them being Men of great Parts, and clear Ratiocination in all other Arguments, they no sooner enter and exercise themselves in this, than they immediately become perplexed and obscure to that Degree, that their nearest Friends do not understand them.

For Idolatry, it were to be wished that Men would first well weigh the severe and exterminating Judgments that are denounced against it by God himself, before they take so much Pains, by subtle and even unnatural Inferences, to draw as many as they can within the reach of those Penalties; like wicked Informers, who are first solicitous to stretch the Law, that it may extend to the Persons, and then to make the Persons guilty of Crimes, that may be drawn within the Compass of the Law. Many learned Men have laboured to persuade us, that Idolatry was the crying Sin
before

before the Flood, and which drew down God's Judgment upon the whole World; and truly, since the very Law of Nature disposes Men to some Religion, it is no wonder that after it was corrupted, and Man without any clear Notions who his Creator was, it disposed him in a short Time to a Thousand Imaginations of Worship, which dishonoured, offended, and incensed God Almighty. But sure we are, that after he had executed that Judgment upon Mankind, he declared so great a Jealousy of this Sin, and took so great Pains to describe it to the Life, that none should be able to run into it without Malice and Deliberation, and then he pronounced his Judgments against and upon it; Judgments of another Nature than he prescribed against any other Sins, the Executions of which Judgments were commonly reserved to some Tribunal, to some Process of Justice, but this upon Idolatry was committed to every private Person: *If thy Brother, the Son of thy Mother, or thy Son, or thy Daughter, or the Wife of thy Bosom, or thy Friend, intice thee secretly, Let us go and serve other Gods, &c. thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him, &c. but thou shalt surely kill him*, Deut. xiii. 6. We should be very wary in declaring Multitudes to be guilty of a Crime, that too many would be apt to think that they have an arbitrary Power to punish. Our Saviour after his Coming retained no Jealousy of that Sin, nor prescribed any Cautions against it; He knew well, that the Enemies to Christianity would continue still Idolaters, but that the Antidote of Christianity would in an Instant expel that Poison; that to be a Christian and an Idolater, is a Contradiction that cannot subsist in one Subject. We may lawfully and piously believe, that no true Christian, much less any Christian Church or State, ever was, or ever can be Idolatrous: Idolatry is rarely used in the *New Testament*, but metaphorically to make some other Sin the more odious; *Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit Sacrilege?* Now thou hast submitted thy self to the Yoke of Christ, and so put it out of thy Power to worship Idols, dost thou invent a new Idolatry, dost thou commit Sacrilege? Covetousness is Idolatry in that Sense. Indeed, Christians may be, and are too great and manifest Idolaters, when they make any beloved Sin their Idol, and sacrifice all their Hopes of Heaven to it: But that Worship and those Sacrifices are as secret as the Thoughts of their Heart, no Pomp and Exaltation in those Idolatries. When so much of the Body of the Law was provided against Idolatry, when it was so severely looked after as that Wickedness that must involve the Nation in the insupportable Displeasure and Anger of God, so that no Man was to shew Mercy to any of them, every Circumstance that approached towards it, every Action that contributed towards it, was not called or looked upon as Idolatry: *Ye shall destroy their Altars, break down their Images, and cut down their Groves*, Exod. xxxiv. was one of the first Injunctions and Articles of War against the Idolatrous Nations. *Ye shall utterly destroy all the Places wherein the Nations which you shall possess served their Gods, upon the high Mountains, and upon the Hills, and under every green Tree*, Deut. xii. And yet Solomon, even when he loved the Lord, and walked in the Statutes of David his Father, sacrificed and burned Incense in high Places, 1 Kings iii. and good Jehoshaphat, who walked in the Ways of Asa his Father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the Sight of the Lord, albeit the high Places were not taken away: He complied too much with the Weakness and Folly of the People, yet neither he nor they were Idolaters. To call every erroneous or unwarrantable Ceremony, or Circumstance or Posture in the Worship and Service of God, upon the Pretence

of some Similitude or Coherence it hath with some Devotion of the Heathen, direct Idolatry, looks as if we had a mind they should be such, that we might have more Reason or Excuse to speak worse of them; and what they do may be bad enough, and in some respects may prove as penal, but I hope Idolatry it is not. No Man ever became an Idolater, who did not forget and deny and forsake the true God; nor is it intelligible that the same Man can in the Morning be an Idolater at Mass, when he acknowledges the Passion and Resurrection of our Saviour, and a good Christian all the Day after: And even in the most jealous Time, when that Transgression raged most furiously, *Ye shall have one Law for him that sinneth through Ignorance, both that is born amongst the Children of Israel, and for the Stranger; but the Soul that doth ought presumptuously, reproacheth the Lord, and shall be cut off*, Numb. xv. we shall, I presume, find many of those Congregations without any of these presumptuous Offenders.

I am not to be thought to approve any of these Particulars, which the Church of *England* dislikes, more than I should be thought to like any other Superstition practis'd, because I will not call it Fornication or Adultery. We ought not to give ill Things worse Names than they deserve, than is agreeable to them; much less endeavour to make Men, who are in the wrong, to appear worse than they are; nor to torture their Words and Expressions, nor their Actions themselves, till we draw Consequences and Conclusions from them, which they did not intend nor will avow, to signify what is laid to their Charge. Where is that Charity, that thinks the best of every thing, that doth not behave itself unseemly, is not easily provoked? We cannot be too strict in the Disquisition of the Opinions and Actions of our own Lives; and it may be, we cannot more prudently examine the Truth of our Opinions, than by the Influence they may have upon our Actions. The Laws cannot be too circumspect in preventing the Communication of new and dangerous Opinions in Religion, nor too severe in punishing those Irregularities of Life, which dishonour and undermine the Exercise of all Religion; but we have no Obligation nor Qualification to pronounce, either upon the most exorbitant Opinions or the worst Actions, the Punishment and Judgment of Damnation, where our Saviour himself hath not denounced it; nor do we wisely, in endeavouring to make the Way to Heaven more difficult than he hath made it; and when he hath contained all necessary Opinions within so little Room, to add so many more to them, under the same Penalty, as disorder our Understandings with Perplexities, and confound our Reason with Contradictions. The Difficulty of the Way to Heaven, and the Streightness and Narrowness of it, doth not proceed from what we think, but what we do; from our not subduing those Affections, and not extinguishing those Passions and Appetites, which always hurry us out of the Way thither, and distract us if we are in Way. If it were not too serious a Matter to be merry in, it might seem very ridiculous, to see with what Civility and Indulgence those Men treat Fornicators, Adulterers, Drunkards, Murtherers and the like, as if they might go on and hope well, against whom God himself hath pronounced the most absolute Exclusion from Salvation; who make no Scruple positively to determine, that whosoever denies Purgatory, Transubstantiation, or the Pope's Supremacy, (of which we have reason to believe that God hath never so much as thought, because he hath never spoken of either) cannot escape eternal Damnation. This ill Temper of Mind and Understanding proceeds from no Cause so much, as from the Want of Knowledge or of Consideration, how much of the Religion in all National Churches

Churches is of the Religion of State, nor hath any other Foundation than in Reason of State; nor is it the less Obligatory for that: All Liturgies, which have ever been instituted for the Service and Worship of God, are purely Forms of State; if it were otherwise, they would be still the same throughout the Church of Christ; whereas there have been great Alterations almost every Century, and sometimes oftner: All Jurisdictions and Precedencies are of the Grants and Authority of Princes, and consequently Matters of State: The taking the Cup from the Laity in the Sacrament is purely Religion of State, for it was instituted in both kinds: All Ceremonies, Festivals, Fasts, and *Lent* itself, (all which make up the Bulk of the *Roman* Religion) are so many Constitutions of State. And it is altogether as reasonable to imagine, that the Peace, Prosperity and Happiness of all the Kingdoms, States and Nations in the World would be improved and advanced, if they were under the sole Government of one King or Emperor, as that it is requisite for all Churches to be under the Power and Direction of one Bishop; and a Bishop so seated, that his Residence is but in one Corner of the Earth. St. *Peter* would not have been so careful to have transmitted the Salutations of the Church that was at *Babylon*, to those to whom he writ, if he had intended that his Successor should condemn all other Churches and Congregations of Christians to be damned, except only those who are under the Church of *Rome*; and it is the most barbarous thing imaginable, to believe that so many Christian Churches as are at this Time separated from the Church of *Rome*, and expelled by her from her Communion, should all affect several Errors, (for the Errors are not supposed to be the same) and all of such a Magnitude, as inevitably excludes them from Salvation; and yet not be able to prescribe or imagine any such Expedient, as may possibly reconcile those monstrous and destructive Opinions and Differences, which they assure themselves must be attended with such irreparable Ruin. They indeed kindly prescribe a universal Submission to the universal Bishop, that is, that all the World shall in all Things submit to the Dictates of the Pope; for the Church of *Rome* hath no other Definition, than what resolves it self into the Determination of the Pope; which no Catholick Kingdom doth or will own their Submission to. And truly, they are not much more ingenuous, who defend themselves and the Doctrine they teach, or the Opinions they hold, by professing that they will readily submit themselves and all their Thoughts to the Decision of a General Council, whenever it shall be lawfully assembled; and many Catholick Doctors are of Opinion, that that Ingenuity and Profession is enough to excuse any Man from being an Heretick: But, I say, there is no Ingenuity in that Declaration, because there is no Sincerity; for besides that some Councils, which are called General, have determined what other Councils as General have contradicted and exploded, they know well that nothing is more impossible than that there can ever be a General Council called lawfully, and peaceably assembled. Who should call it? Though Antiquity never doubted, that the Rights of calling General Councils was alone in the Emperors; yet all Men know that the Pope will not allow it to be in any Body but himself, and yet he knows and confesses that it is not in his Power to compel any Persons to appear there; that Obligation is to be laid upon them by their own Sovereign Princes; and that whatever is determined in those Councils, is not of any Force or Validity till it be received and admitted by that Sovereign Power. Where then shall this Council meet? If in or near *Rome*, other Parts of the Christian Church will be at so great a Distance, (and when all the World shall be

Christian, which all good Christians hope it will, the Distance will be much greater) that it will take up so much of the Life of a Man, that very few Men would live to return to their Country with the Result of what that Council concludes. And if all these Objections were away, it is notoriously known that the Church of *Rome* will never admit, nor by its own Decrees of Council can admit, any Prelates or others to Sit, Consult and Vote with them, who are not already of the same Faith; and the Princes and People of those Nations have little Reason to submit to the Authority, and to receive the Dictates of such a General Council. Therefore Men shall with much more Integrity insist upon the Strength of those Arguments which have prevailed upon their own Understandings, than pretend to refer all to a General Council, that they know, as much as they can know any Thing, can never meet.

There is indeed another Expedient, that would go far towards the removing or composing all those Differences which bring Scandal upon the Church of Christ; which is, that Christian Princes would convene National Councils in their several Dominions, to enquire what Corruptions have been introduced into the Exercise of their Religion, first by Connivance, and then by Faction improved and carried on for the Advancement of particular Interests; what was innocently and piously instituted, and in Tract of Time and ill Manners of the Age hath degenerated into Practice that is prejudicial and hurtful to Religion; and lastly, what Errors are so incorporated into the Customs and Natures and Humours of the Nation, that they can hardly be examined, much less reformed, without producing more Inconveniencies and Mischiefs than it would remove. I am persuaded, there are very few Kingdoms or Nations which are possessed of Peace, where such Disquisitions, prudently governed by the Supreme Magistracy, would not do much good, in altering some Things, and reforming more Persons: They might produce a good Intelligence and Correspondence between Neighbour Nations; and though neither of them would probably change their Opinions or Practice, it is very possible that they might discover the Differences between them to be less important and more innocent than they imagined them to have been; and if some Kingdoms did not agree together to refer all Disputes which shall arise in their Dominions to a third Person, who resides in neither of them, they who will make none of those Submissions, have no reason to be offended, or to censure the other; let them intend their own Business. Nor is it reasonable to imagine, that any one National Church (in which we may presume there are many learned and pious Men) would not preserve and establish all the Fundamentals of Christian Religion, and that they would not otherwise differ from each other than as would consist with those Foundations; and as there is no Church so pure as to have no Errors, so no one would introduce or permit such Errors as would make them unworthy to be considered as a Church. We know it was a National Council that at *Illiberis*, which preserved and by degrees vindicated the Catholick Church from the Poison of *Arius*, after it was countenanced and supported by a General Council, and when the Pope *Liberius* himself was infected with it. And as the Peace of *Christendom* can be no other way procured and preserved and propagated, than by the good Intelligence and Correspondence that is produced between the Princes thereof, by Ambassadors and Commissaries, from whence Alliances, Commerce and Leagues result; so a Participation and mutual Communication between those National Councils, with the Privy and Licence of the Sovereign Princes, of the Doubts which arise, and the Reasons

sons which prevail in their several Consultations, would be a much more hopeful Expedient to extinguish Errors, and to introduce Unity in Things wherein Unity is necessary, (for a Unity in all Things never was, nor ever will be in the Catholick Church) than to subject them all to the supercilious Judicatory of one Tribunal, which can never be truly informed, nor judge impartially; and all the Differences which would remain, would appear to each other to be of that Nature, as to be fit to be retained in either, or which ought not to interrupt their Charity to each other: for that may be a Truth and fit to be retained in *France*, where it hath the Approbation of Church and State, which is a great Error in *England*, where it is rejected and condemned by both; as that concerning the Pope's Authority, and some other Particulars.

In this manner, and with this Consent and Authority, it pleased God to reform the Church of *England*, and to purge it from some Errors and Superstitions, which, unwarily brought in and connived at, had produced many Inconveniencies and Mischiefs, and the Continuance whereof would have multiplied those Mischiefs: and it cannot be denied, that this necessary Reformation was very prejudicial to the Court of *Rome*; which being fast bound up to and with that Church, by the joint imaginary Authority, separated it self from Communion with it, and excommunicated the other; and to make it the more odious, and to draw in other secular Interests to join with them in the Quarrel, they endeavoured to perswade the World, that this great Alteration and pretended Reformation proceeded only from the inordinate Affection and infamous Lust of *Henry* the Eighth; who, because the Pope had refused to grant a Divorce to that King, from a Princess of great Virtue, his lawful Wife, that he might marry another whose Beauty pleased him more, therefore separated himself from the Communion of that Church, and introduced the new Religion: And this Uningenuity is still continued and practised by the *Roman* Party, contrary to Truth, and to the expresse Knowledge of those who are conversant in the History of that Time. In truth, that King might well be offended with the Pope, for refusing to grant him the same Dispensation, which a precedent Pope within so few Years before in his own Time had granted to the King of *France*, *Lewis* the Twelfth, who was thereby set at liberty from his former Wife, by whom he had Children, and married the Wife of the last King, the Heir of the Dutchy of *Brittany*, that he might thereby annex that Dutchy to the Crown of *France*, as it hath ever since remained: Yet that Refusal, though the Pope had promised to grant it, and had first cherished those Scruples which made the King demand the Dispensation, did not produce any Part of the Reformation of Religion; but when that great King found the Pope's Weakness so wrought upon, that for the Support of a secular Rival Interest, he was by the Threats and Menaces of the Emperor *Charles* the Fifth compelled to issue out a Bull of Excommunication against the King, and shortly after by another Bull to absolve all his Subjects from their Oaths of Allegiance, and from being longer subject to him; it is no wonder that he would no longer connive at the Exercise of such a Jurisdiction, that would contain it self within no modest Bounds, and forbid his Subjects any longer to pay any Reverence to that Tribunal. And in this he did no more than many of his Predecessors, most Catholick Kings, *Edward* the First, and *Edward* the Third, had done in the most Catholick Times, upon other Excesses and Provocations from the *Roman* Chair; so far was the Subjection to it believed then to be of the Essence of Religion that was called Catholick: And *Lewis* the Twelfth of *France* did not

less, when *Julio* the Second had so absurdly excommunicated him, but contemned that Excommunication, and the Pope that emitted it, and forbade his Subjects to have any Commerce with *Rome*; till his prudent Successor *Leo* the Tenth, without any Application from *France*, made up that Breach. And after all this, *Henry* the Eighth never separated himself from the Church Catholick, but lived and died as much of that Religion, as he was when he writ against *Luther*; and caused more Men to be put to Death, for opposing those Opinions which were afterwards exploded, than suffered in the Reign of his Daughter Queen *Mary*.

We owe our Reformation (God be thanked) to a better Time, and to better Motives. We do not justify nor excuse the Excesses of that King, which were *vitia temporis*, as well as *vitia hominis*, not a Prince that reigned with him having been of less inordinate Affections; and he had sure some very great Virtues, at least equal to theirs, which ought to procure him a more reverend Testimony than he usually receives from those of his own Faith and Religion. With what Temper, and Peace, and Quiet, and therefore by what Spirit it was reformed, is before truly related. We censure not those who chuse to continue as they were, who yet owe us for much of the Quiet they enjoy, by another kind of Temper and Compliance than the Popes formerly exercised towards them; nor do we commend all those who desire to be thought to have followed our Example. We do not condemn those amongst us, who, enjoying the Benefit and Protection of the Laws, ought to be subject to them, for being Catholicks; we do not prosecute them for believing Purgatory, or Transubstantiation: if they will renounce their own Reason and their Senses, which we cannot do, we reproach them not, nor believe that they will be damned because they have no better Understandings; and we know that many learned and pious Men think as they do. That which we blame them for, and think them worthy of Punishment, is, that under pretence of Religion and being Catholicks, they entertain and avow Opinions dangerous to the Peace of the State in which they live, and which are no Part of Catholick Religion: That the Religion professed by them who would be thought Catholicks in *England*, and for which they undergo any Prejudice there, consists only of the pure Dictates of the Bishop of *Rome*; and for which they have no other Foundation in Scripture, Fathers or Councils, but only his Dictates. No Body asks them what they think of the Sacrament, or of Prayer to Saints; it is probable they held the same Opinions they have now, during those Eleven or Twelve Years in which they communicated with the Church of *England* after Queen *Elizabeth* came to the Crown; nor did they pretend any Excuse for declining it afterwards, but only the Bull of Pope *Pius*, who forbid them so to do; and who likewise absolved them from their Fidelity to the Queen, and from all Oaths which obliged them thereunto, and deprived her Majesty of the Crown; and their yielding Obedience to this Bull was the Ground of the first Penalties imposed upon them and the Exercise of their Religion. What Council hath established or owned any such Authority to reside in the Pope? Or what Catholick Kingdom doth at this Time acknowledge it? And therefore we may well and truly say, That whatever Part of their Religion is penal to them in *England*, hath no other Ground or Foundation but the Pope's Dictate. If they allege some Decrees or Canons of the Council of *Trent*, as obligatory to them, they allege that which no Catholick Subjects in any Catholick Kingdom dare urge, for their submitting to any Canon that is not received and approved by the Sovereign Power of that Kingdom.

Kingdom. It is a Catholick Doctrine, that the most General Councils do not bind, except in those Countries where they are received. If they say, which amongst other Foreign Catholicks gives them greatest Reputation, and moves most Compassion, as for their Fellow Members, that all Exercise of their Religion is prohibited to them, since going to Mass and receiving the Sacrament is not lawful for them; they know (besides the Indulgence that is given them in that respect by the Connivance of the Magistrate) whose Subjects they are; who they would have permitted to administer their Sacraments, and to govern their Consciences; what Oaths they have taken to the Pope, when they will take none to the King; that they are Men who enter into his Dominions expressly against his Consent, and being his own Subjects are expressly sent by the Pope to corrupt the Affections of his People: and that there should be any Jealousy of those so necessary Assistants of their Devotions seems to them to be very unreasonable. This is then the Case: These Men, the Kings Subjects, will live in his Dominions, and will acknowledge a Foreign Power to be superior to that of their own Sovereign in his own Kingdoms; a Power that pretends and practises a Right to depose Kings, and to absolve Subjects from their Obedience; the King and the Law requires that these Men shall declare, that this Foreign Prince hath no lawful Power to do the one or the other, either to depose their Natural King, or to absolve them from their Allegiance, or the Oaths of Fidelity which they have taken, and that they do abhor and detest this damnable Doctrine; and the Conscience of those good Catholicks will not suffer them to make or subscribe this Declaration: Are there any other Catholicks in *Christendom*, who avow to have this Conscience, or who refuse to give their Prince this Security for their Obedience, if they are required thereunto? Hath not the Parliament at *Paris*, and the Catholick University of the *Sorbonne*, solemnly declared and determined that there is no such Power or Authority in the Pope, in as full Terms and Expressions, as any which are contained in the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, and condemned the contrary Opinion as treasonous, impious and heretical? And how can these Men then excuse themselves from giving this necessary Security to the King under whom they live, because it is against the Catholick Religion? What Prince or Catholick State can think themselves or their Religion concerned, because the King of *England* requires his Catholick Subjects to disclaim those Opinions, which no Subject of their own dares harbour in his Thoughts; or if he be known to do it, shall pay the Penalty of his Life? Let this therefore, which comprehends and would remove all the Mischief which the State complains of, be pressed and exacted from them; and which they cannot refuse to consent to upon any Catholick Principle, upon any Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, but out of a tame and stupid Submission and Resignation to the Court of *Rome*, and to the individual Person of the Pope: All which ought to be rooted out of the Imagination of all the Subjects of the World, of what Church soever. And if this Satisfaction, and Security, and Submission, were given to the Law and to the State, which cannot confidently enjoy Peace without it, there would be Clergy enough, and of the best amongst them, of the same Faith, who, if they were sure never to be exposed to that Jurisdiction they disclaim, would be ready to renounce it, and to perform their Function in all other Parts with all requisite Integrity; and then it may be the State would think its Peace and Tranquility in no more danger from their other Opinions, than from the Contradictions which have risen upon the Circulation of the Blood, or the

Hereby denounced at *Rome* upon *Galileo's Opticks*, or any of those Differences which are debated between *Roman* Catholicks themselves with so much Virulency and Animosity; and which if they are not of equal Importance with those between the Protestants and them, they are the more to blame to handle them with so little Modesty or Charity, that the Reproachings and Revilings they entertain each other with, are not inferior to what *Celsus* or *Porphiry* used against the Primitive Christians, and to which the Wisdom of the Civil State hath put an End, at least a Suspension, by obliging both Parties to Silence, when the Determination and Authority of the Church rather added Spurs than a Bridle to the Fierceness of the Contention. So far the Crown of *France* and the *Gallican* Church are from acknowledging the Person of the Pope to be the Catholick Church; and yet his sole personal Authority must serve to withdraw the Obedience of the *Roman* Catholicks of *England* from the King, and to restrain them from submitting to the wholesome Laws of their Country.

A Kingdom divided in it self cannot stand. Not that such a Union is necessary to the Peace thereof, that all Men must think the same Thing, or concur in the same Action; such a Unity is not necessary nor requisite in private Families, and would obstruct all growth of Knowledge and improvement of Virtue in all Publick Kingdoms and States: But the Division is most prodigious, when all the Kingdom will not obey one Sovereign; when one Part of it will submit to a Sovereignty which their Sovereign forbids, and which pretends to a Power to depose the other. I am sure he must have an Understanding more subtle than any of those with whom I am acquainted, who can so far reconcile those two Powers, that they may consist together, and the King be safe or the Kingdom in Peace. It is no Answer, nor hath any good Meaning in it, to say that the King shall have the same Authority over his Subjects that all Catholick Princes have, and the Pope no more than he enjoys in those Princes Dominions: I say, this Answer hath no good Meaning in it; for besides that it is a pretty Imposition upon any King, to put him to enquire into the Pleasure of other Kings, and the Laws of other Countries, that he may be able to govern his own Subjects, they well know that there are no Two Kingdoms in which the Pope's Authority is the same, and none in which he hath more than is given him by Contract from the Crown, and for which it receives a valuable Compensation; nor is any doubt left what or how much it is; and whatever it is, it is upon any emergent Occasion limited or taken away according to the Pleasure of the Crown. What is this to *England*? where by the Laws of the Land he hath no Power at all, but is justly excluded, and is or ought to be looked upon as a publick Enemy by the Law of Nations; since he will not admit that Intelligence, and Correspondence, and Alliance with that Crown, by Ambassadors and publick Ministers, which is necessary for the establishing of Peace, and without which all Acts of Hostility may be committed upon each other: And yet the Catholicks of *England* must have liberty, for the Satisfaction of their Conscience, not only to introduce this Foreign Power, but to make it as large and ample as they please. For who can restrain it? For the King and the Law hath done all they can to shut it out; so that they who in spite of them will bring it in, may extend it to what they please; nor have they yet in any Degree defined what it is, or what they would have it to be. There are amongst them, of the most valuable of their Clergy and their Laity, who would be content to renounce all the Pope's Temporal Authority in the King's Dominions; which none of the *Jesuits* and few of the Regulars will
be

be brought to; but then they all insist alike (at least till they are put to it, then as hath been said before you shall find enough of another Resolution) upon his Spiritual Power and Jurisdiction, which their Conscience will not suffer them to decline. Ask them, what General Council or Catholick Consent hath defined what that Spiritual Power is? They answer nothing clearly or directly, but desire you to believe, that it can never do the King hurt, or endanger the Peace of the Kingdom; and then they utter some sturdy Words against the Pope, and how resolutely they would fight against him, if he came or sent to invade *England*: And yet they will not say that he hath not Authority to depose the King, or absolve them from their Obedience; and keep it still within their own Breasts what this Spiritual Power, which they are peremptory and obstinate to reserve for him, shall signify; Time must determine that, they will not presume to do it. And if you speak with them who are of the best Parts severally, so that they cannot avoid making you some Answer, there is no more Coherence in what they say, than there would be in the Description of any other thing in which they had only a superficial Understanding; so that you would reasonably conclude that they either have not the true Key to the Cypher, or that they are obliged not to make you acquainted with it. They will not deny, that the Power of the Mission, the Authority of sending such Priests as he judges necessary for the Advancement of Catholick Religion, is a Part of that Spiritual Jurisdiction; and if that be so, they cannot heartily renounce his Temporal: for though the Ordination in itself may be Spiritual, sure the Mission is as Temporal a Power as can be exercised or pretended to. And the Truth is, no Temporal Power in the King can secure him from all the ill Effects of Sedition and Rebellion, if there be a superior Spiritual Jurisdiction, which may send his Enemies into his Kingdom, who are particularly excluded by him, to persuade as many of his Subjects as they can to entertain the same Affections and Resolutions with themselves; nor can any Man, how well affected or resolved soever, reasonably assure himself how far he will resist or contradict those Commands or Injunctions, which proceed from a Person whom he believes to have a lawful Power and Jurisdiction over his Conscience. But if it were not for this Mission, the Exercise of their Religion could not subsist; which is no Argument to invest an Enemy Prince with Power to send his Emissaries into the Dominions of another Prince, from which they are banished. It is not penal for the Subject of another Prince, though a Priest, to come into *England*, or to remain there; it is only unlawful for his own Subjects, who upon the Matter disclaim his Subjection, and yet will live there by virtue of another Man's Authority. It may reasonably be thought, that he who upon the Impulsion of his own Conscience, as believing it to be an Obligation upon his Function to resort to those who stand in need of his Spiritual Offices, commits a Crime more excusable in resorting thither upon that true Motive, than to come clandestinely by virtue of a Foreign Mission, which claims the same Authority to send Armies as well as Confessors. Nor is the Pope so fond of interrupting the Exercise of Catholick Religion, when upon the particular Quarrel with any Prince, he will interdict a whole Catholick Country, and thereupon no Priest dares perform his Office. But resolute Princes have always found a Remedy against those Encroachments, as our *Edward* in the Year Thirteen Hundred and Forty, when he had possessed himself of *Lisle*, *Douay* and other Towns in *Flanders*; and *Philip* of *Valois* so far prevailed with Pope *Benedict* the Twelfth, that at his Request (as most of the Pope's Presumptions had its Original from the

Factions

Factions between Kings, which drew on their Importunities) he laid those Countries under an Interdict, which all the Priests obey'd very exactly, and the Country was under a great Consternation; but King *Edward* presently sent into *England* for other Ecclesiasticks who were not so scrupulous, and opened all the Churches, and celebrated the Mass as heretofore. The same Remedy *Lewis* the Twelfth in *France*, and the Republick of *Venice* under the Interdict of *Paul* the Fifth, and other Princes since, have applied to the same Disease. Princes who will be obey'd by their own Subjects, shall be so; nor will they suffer such who obey them as they ought to do, to be without any Comfort that their very Infirmities require. Let the Catholics in *England* perform their Duty as other Catholics do to their Sovereign Princes, and they will receive the same Protection. The Bishops in *France* cannot exercise their spiritual Jurisdiction, until they have taken their Oath of Allegiance to the King; and why a Priest in *England*, who hath taken his Orders out of the Kingdom, and subscribed his Obedience to a foreign Prince, should presume to exercise his Function there, before he hath given the same Security to his Sovereign, need to have other Reason for such his Refusal, than can be deduced from Catholick Religion. And if the Pope's own Legates may not enter into the Dominions of Catholick Princes with whom he is allied, without their express Consent and Leave, and their examining and approving their very Commission, what Colour is there that their inferior Missions by themselves, or by Persons authorized by them, should find Admission for Persons with whom the State is offended?

There is another Division that will hinder a Kingdom from standing, at least from standing so firmly that it may not be very dangerously shaken, when one Part of it presumes to think that the other, tho' much superior in Number, and that hath the Countenance and Support of the Law and of the Government, is so far from being in a State of Salvation, that they shall inevitably be damned if they do not change their Religion; and this is the Case of the *Roman* Catholics in *England*, who are taught, and commanded to believe, that no Protestant, dying a Protestant, can be saved, and that their believing this is as necessary, as to believe that there is Heaven or Hell. If they do really believe this, they are very inexcusable for not withdrawing out of such ill Company; if they do not believe it, (as very few learned Men do) they are very wicked to introduce, by their Countenance and Dissimulation, so foul a Custom of evil speaking, and so uncharitable an Opinion in the Hearts of those who receive their Faith from them. It cannot be enough wondered at, that they who believe that it is not lawful to keep Company, or to eat, or have any Commerce with a Person who is excommunicated, should take upon them to make Friendships and Alliances with a People who they are well assured are to be damned; that they should trust themselves with and in such Company, for fear of exposing the Integrity of their own Manners, to be dangerously tempted and corrupted by Men who are condemned to Hell-Fire; and it is no less wonderful, that Men who know how harsh Judgments are pronounced against them, can be perswaded to gratify those Men with their Conversation in this World, who declare they will have none with them in the next. Men lose their Reputation by being known to have Familiarity with debauched Persons, and who are but suspected to be of infamous Manners; and can they take Delight to be with them who are condemned to everlasting Perdition? Do wise Men chuse wholesome Places to live in, and will they be content to chuse an Air to live in that

is more infectious than the Plague? I must confess, I have too charitable an Opinion of the *Roman* Catholicks, to imagine that they would embrace a Familiarity, much less a Friendship with me, if they did think that God Almighty had pronounced his Decree of eternal Damnation against me, when, to all common Appearance, my Life is as blameless as other Mens. I must then believe, that tho' they enjoin their weak Brethren and their willful Sisters to give Credit to that Assertion, as the best Argument they can supply them with to retain them in their Communion; yet that the learned and the prudent amongst them do not entertain so ignorant and so barbarous an Imagination; and when they are pressed to own and avow that Opinion, which they so industriously scatter amongst their common Profelytes, they avoid and decline it, by saying, they do not think so, because they hope and believe that we will all be converted, and renounce our heretical Opinions, and be reconciled to their Church before we die. In which they are as uningenuous as in the rest; for, in Truth, whatever they may hope, for which we must take their own Word, we have no Reason to think they believe any such Thing: for, besides the few Examples they have of any Protestants, eminent for Learning, Wisdom, or Probity, who have lived in that Religion, and renounced it at their Death, it is in no Degree rational to expect it; for, tho' vicious and loose Persons, who have lived in notorious Sins, and committed many wicked Actions, do oftentimes upon the Approach of Death, and those terrible Apprehensions which at that Time they can hardly be without, reflect upon those Enormities and Transgressions, which till then they had shut out of their Memories, and so are willing to repent, (and of what Value such Repentance is, God only knows;) yet, I say, it is not rational to believe, that a Man who hath through the whole Course of his Life, and upon the strongest Exercise of his Understanding, contracted an Opinion in speculative Matters, and been of uncorrupted Manners, can, upon the Approach of Death, disentangle himself, and put off those Opinions, without another kind of Disquisition than that narrow Season will admit. I will not expect, that one of them, who hath so much master'd his Understanding, and over-ruled his Sense and his Reason upon many Disquisitions, as throughout his Life to believe Transubstantiation, shall at the Hour of his Death be suddenly enlightened with an Evidence that he hath been all that Time in the wrong; nor will I believe that his Condition is the worse, by dying in the same Faith (how erroneous soever) in which he lived. So that those Men who seem to expect such a Reformation, allege it only to shelter themselves from declaring their Judgment contrary to their Reason, and their Conscience. But what then can we think of these Men, if they do not in Truth think what they make others say, and, it may be, by their Infusions really believe? Can we think them profitable and peaceable Members of a Protestant Kingdom? May we not with some Justice doubt that they do in Truth not wish we may be saved, against whom they so peremptorily pronounce Damnation? It may be thought a great Excess of Charity and Mercy in the Crown, if it expects Fidelity from them, who will not promise to be faithful; from them, who believe that a foreign Prince hath a superior Jurisdiction over their Conscience, and who hath attempted to deprive the King, and yet will not declare that he hath no such Power; that they who protest against yielding Obedience to the established Laws for Conscience sake, will not be glad, and take the first Opportunity by Force, to suppress those Laws, and to rescue themselves from a Power they are resolved not to obey. It is no reasonable Allegation, that Protestants enjoy the same Liberty

in Catholick Countries which they desire here. Protestants enjoy no Liberty in those Countries but what is their Right, and granted to them by the Laws and Constitution of the Kingdom; they would be glad to be possessed of that, and desire no more; they have the same Title to the Protection of the Law that the Catholicks have, and may expect in Justice the same Security from it, tho' not the same Countenance; nor do they refuse to give any Assurance, or to enter into any Obligation, for their good and peaceable Behaviour, and their entire Obedience to the Crown, that the State requires; nor do they pretend, in the least Degree, to owe any to any foreign Prince or Power: Whereas the other complain of nothing but that they may not do that which the Law forbids them to do, nor leave that undone which the Law enjoins them to do. So far is the Case of the one and the other from being the same.

What must we do then to preserve this divided Kingdom from falling, the Foundations of which are so much shaken, and Mines made every Day to shake and blow up the rest? There recurs to common Reason but three Expedients to prevent this woful Ruin and Destruction. The first is, That the Catholick Party conforms it self to the Church and to the Law. The second, That the Protestants renounce their Religion, and become *Roman Catholicks*. And the Third, That the one or the other leave the Kingdom, and reside where they find their Humours, Interest and Affections best complied with. I am one of those who do really believe the Church of *England* to be the best constituted, and to be most free from Errors (for Errors have always been, and are, and will always be in all Churches Militant) of any that is now in the Christian World; yet I do not know, but that the Belief and Exercise of that Religion, which in the Opinion of all Catholicks is of the Essence of Catholick Religion, may well consist with the Salvation of the pious Persons, and with the Peace of the Kingdom, and with the Charity of all: But when the Obstinacy of the *English* Catholicks shall adhere to a Religion of their own making, or made to their Hand by the Pope; and upon the Obligation of that, refuse to submit to those Engagements which the Wisdom of the State believes to be absolutely necessary to its Security; I know not whether I shall call it their Divinity or their Morality, but whatever it is, it obliges us to resort back to one of the Three before-mentioned Expedients: and we shall therefore consider, which of them is most reasonable to be embraced or consented to. That the Protestants should renounce their Religion and Church in which they have been born, bred, and instructed, which hath been so regularly, deliberately and peaceably reformed, and is so firmly established by Law, cannot reasonably be expected. They must first declare that Church, to be heretical, and that those that have or shall die in it have no Hope of Salvation. (2.) They must renounce a great Part of that Allegiance which they have sworn to the King, and deprive his Majesty of that absolute Supremacy which is his Right in his own Dominions; and acknowledge a Superiority to be in a Foreign Prince to some purposes, which may overthrow it to all other purposes; which no other *Roman Catholicks* are obliged or suffered to believe. (3.) They must not only be deprived of the Sacrament in that manner that it was instituted by our Saviour himself, but must confess that one half of it was well and necessarily taken away, for so says one of the Canons of the Council of *Trent*; though so great a Part of the Catholick Church so publicly have complained against it, and though for above Seven Hundred Years after our Saviour's Time it was esteemed Sacrilege in the very Church of *Rome* to abstain from the Cup, and a great Part

Part of the Catholick Church still retain it; and there is a very great difference in the Points of Conscience or Excuse between their Submission to this Deprivation, who by the Constitution of their Church and the Laws of the Land, cannot be admitted to the Whole, and their departing from a Church where they are in intire Possession of it. (4.) They must pretend to believe that which they do as much know not to be true, as they can know any Thing to be true or false in this World; that is, that the consecrated Bread is really and substantially Flesh, the Verity of which is so undeniably contradicted and controled by our Senses, that we may as reasonably believe that our Ears and our Eyes deceive us when we hear or read the Institution of that blessed Sacrament, as that we are coufened by our Senses in that Particular. These are Particulars of a very high Importance, for Men who have been long confirmed in the Belief of them to depart from, and renounce upon short Warning or slender Arguments; and the saying that all this is easily and quickly done, if we but once believe the Church, justly awakens another Apprehension in us, that we may hereafter be induced by the same Argument to deny God himself: which, tho' a Suspicion not lawful to entertain concerning the Catholick Church, may warrantably be apprehended from the Church of *Rome*, when it once already hath been so near it, as it was when the Pope and all the Churches of *Italy* became *Arian*. And when Men giddily depart from a Habitation that is built upon a Rock, though it be exposed to some violent Winds and Storms, that they may reside in a House that is more warmly situated, though the Foundation be but Sand, they shall do wisely too late, if they fear that some new Gust may carry them and their Mansion into some Inconveniencies which they would be glad to avoid. He who shall adhere too obstinately to his Reason in his Inquisition into the Mysteries of Faith, may wander too far into a Wilderness of Perplexities and Doubts; but he who shall totally abandon it, is as much in danger not to find the Truth, nor to retain any Reverence for Religion.

Let us then in the next Place, examine why the *Roman Catholics* of *England* (who how numerous soever, cannot be thought to be in Number equal to the Protestants, and if they be, it is high Time to look the more strictly after them) should not become Protestants, and what they can say for themselves to support the Schism they are guilty of, for the Schism is apparently on their Side; for they cannot deny, that they did for many Years frequent our Churches and our Liturgy after the Reformation, nor pretend that we put them out; but must confess, that upon the Pope's Bull, and an Obedience to it, they withdrew from us. If they comply with us, they pay an Obedience to the Laws of their Country, and perform a necessary Subjection to the Government under which they are; both which is a necessary Part of Christian Religion, and for not doing whereof they have no other Excuse, but what involves them in a Sin equal to the other; which is, the accusing the Law which they will not obey, of Impiety, and the Government to which they will not be subject, of Tyranny: both which they determine magisterially without any Pretence themselves to be other than private Persons. So that every particular Man who will own any Scruples, or hath any Humours of his own which dispose him to contradict the Laws and the Government, hath as much to say for himself as they have. Nor doth their Pretence of Authority from the Church of *Rome*, or the Catholick Church it self, make any Excuse for them: For the Church of *Rome*, they well know, it hath no Authority in *England*, but is excluded from thence, as it hath

often

often been in the most Catholick Countries, as it is restrained or enlarged in all the rest, as the Reason of State makes it more or less necessary; and for the Catholick Church, there is not One amongst Five Hundred of them knows the Extent or Narrowness of it, or the Differences of the Professions in the several Parts thereof; but must take both the Geography and Opinions upon Trust from those, who it may be know neither, and evidently very much differ in the Relation and Information they make of either; and therefore it will not only be the modestest, but the safest way for them to believe the Church established in their own Country, where are all the Officers which our Saviour left, or his Apostles prescribed to the Church, and the Service is performed, and the Sacraments devoutly administered, to be the universal Church, or so much of it as they need to be informed of, and ought to be governed by; and in the Determinations whereof they may so safely acquiesce and repose themselves, that if any Errors are received in it, or some Truths excluded out of it, they may reasonably believe that the Penalty (whatsoever it shall be) shall be paid by those who have misguided them, and not by them who have chosen that Guide, whom they could with most Probability and Reason judge to be the best: Whereas the entertaining the Pride and the Presumption in their own Hearts, to censure and condemn what they are not sure they do understand; and then to disobey what they might be sure they ought to submit to, or to which they may safely conform, is to expose themselves to all the unruly Temptations of those two wild Passions, which usually leave no Christian Virtue unattempted or unsubdued. We are not ashamed, nay, we glory in it, that we did keep them Company in the entertaining many Errors, and practising many Corruptions, which crept into the Church undiscerned; and many, which by the Effects and Operation proved to be such, which it may be in the first Introduction or Admission were neither Errors nor Corruptions; and when they were discerned to be both, we chose rather to defer so much as the full Examination as well as the Reformation of them, until God gave an Opportunity warrantably and peaceably to effect it, without reproaching those who had not the same Opportunity to do it; and adhered still to them in all that is of the Essence of Christian Religion, or had been held to be so for above One Thousand Years after our Saviour. As they ought to acquiesce in this Establishment, by which they will enjoy many and great Benefits in the Obedience they pay to their Superiors, which is a Duty God requires from them; so they will thereby obtain much Ease and Tranquility of Mind, and free themselves from that Anguish and Anxiety which must perplex them in continual Contentions and Oppositions of Authority; there being nothing that can firmly support them in Conscience or Discretion so well, as reposing them upon the Piety and Wisdom of the Church and State under which they live: which will expel all those Doubts and Apprehensions which busy and refractory Men suggest to them, and with which few of them are qualified to struggle and contend; nor can they with a good Conscience to God and Man entertain those Doubts which trouble them most. Weak or wilful Doubts may perplex, and make Men irresolute, who have no Rule prescribed to them, but are left to chuse for themselves; whereas a Certainty of a Rule by which I am to walk, abolishes in an instant the Uncertainty of all Doubts, and by prescribing the Duty leaves no Warrant for the further Doubt; if it were otherwise all Government must be at an end; and private Men will always have Scruples of their own, by which they will conclude that it is not lawful for them to do what the Publick Authority

and Interest hath judged necessary for them to do; the King's Battles shall not be fought, nor his Enemies repelled, upon the doubt of the Lawfulness and Justice of the War; and so their want of Courage and Obedience shall be excused and justified, by the Superfluity of their Doubts and Irresolution.

Since neither of these Expedients is like to reduce us to such a Peace and Agreement between our selves, that we may live comfortably and charitably together, we must resort to the last Remedy, and one quit the Country to the other, by removing out of it. And in this Point it can be no more expected or imagined, that the Protestants, who have their Lives and Estates secured to them by the Law, should leave the Country to be possessed by the other, because they are so uncharitable as to believe them incapable of Salvation, than that free Citizens, who enjoy Peace and Plenty, will give up their strong and well fortified City to a Body of Banditti, because they infest their Fields and Vineyards. Besides, they know not whether to repair, to enjoy the same Benefits, and Advantages they have at Home. Whereas the other cannot be blamed for withdrawing themselves from so many severe Penalties and other Reproaches, which distinguish them from other Subjects, and from whence they cannot redeem themselves without offering Violence to their Consciences; and they have the Choice of many Places to resort to, where their Faith shall make them the more acceptable, and their Obedience to what they approve, and resolve to submit to, the more innocent; and if their Consciences were as tender as they pretend to be, they would not only detest, which no doubt they do, but exceedingly fear the Company and Conversation of those who they are sure must be damned, lest their Affection, and Indulgence, and Obligations to their Persons, and it may be some Delight in their Manners, may not lessen that necessary Zeal in their Religion, and make them believe that they may be saved; which is inconsistent as they seem to think with being a true Catholick, or may make others suspect that their Religion is not sincere. We see Women, who desire to preserve the Integrity of their Fame, and that it may not be sullied, though with improbable Suspensions, are very careful to avoid the Society of those of their own Sex, who have the Reputation of Lightness; and yet there have been many *Mary Magdalens* of them, and therefore they ought not to despair of their Salvation; yet their Providence becomes them, and they may be reasonably thought not to be solicitous enough for their own Salvation, who take Pleasure to converse with those who they are sure or are bound to believe shall be without it. The Protestants are without the Reach or Danger of any of those Reasons or Temptations; and though they may reasonably think themselves upon some Disadvantage with Reference to the Affairs of this World, in believing themselves bound equally in Honour and Justice and Conscience, to observe and perform all the Promises, and Oaths, and Contracts, which they make with Papists as well as Protestants; whereas the other have many Evasions upon the Difference of their Faith, and powerful Assurance by Dispensations and Absolutions for the Breach of theirs; yet they are far from believing that they are not in a State and Possibility of Salvation, though they should not renounce those Errors which seem most to threaten it, and which they can never renounce till they are convinced that they are Errors. We are not bound to think, that their believing that the Bread or Wafer which they take in the Communion is the real Flesh of our Saviour, (if they do believe it) will damn them; the Danger on our Side is, that if we pretend to believe it, we lie, (which may damn us) because we know that it is not,

as much as we know that a Stone is not Butter : but we may innocently believe that this Error and Corruption of the Understanding may be one of the Weeds which our Saviour would have suffered to grow till the Harvest, and would not suffer to be pulled up by rude or unskilful Hands, lest they pull up the Wheat with them ; who knows whether the Minds and Understandings of Men be not so infatuated, that if Transubstantiation were pulled up, the Sacraments themselves would not be pulled up ? As to all those Men who have brought themselves to believe it, we do piously believe that God would never have vouchsafed to have given and prescribed that Earnest of Salvation to us, and then damn us for discerning any Alteration in the Elements, or them for thinking they discern that which they do not discern ; the Preparation and Caution and Obligation which he prescribes, we all pretend to observe, which is the Life of the Sacrament ; and if they out of Reverence to the Letter (which they do not observe in other Texts of Scripture) are able to bring themselves to believe what is not possible for us to comprehend, and we conceive that the precise Letter (because of the seeming Impossibility and Contradiction) is no more to be submitted to, than other Expressions of the same Kind used by our Saviour himself, *I am the Door ; I am the true Vine ; Call no Man your Father upon Earth ; If any Man come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters, yea, and his own Life too, he cannot be my Disciple ;* and many other Expressions, which are usual throughout the Word of God, and which being understood according to the literal Sense would dissolve all natural Relations, and enervate the Duties especially enjoined : I say, in both these Cases, let the Error be where it will, we may hope and believe that the Penalty will be less than Damnation ; and then, what Postures soever are used in the receiving it, which are frequently the same, or very like in devout Persons of very different and contrary Conceptions, will not increase the Penalty of the Opinion. We do not believe that God himself broke and pulled down the Pale and the Hedge, with which he had inclosed the Church of his own chosen People the *Jews*, to let all the World into the same Hope and Assurance with them of Salvation, which was the chief End of sending his only Son, to make Salvation harder, to be obtained with more Difficulty under the Gospel than it was under the Law, where every Duty was prescribed to the Life ; and to leave us under an arbitrary Servitude to the Pope, who may add every Day to our Obligations, and make somewhat necessary to our Salvation which our Fathers were saved without : A Jurisdiction the High Priest never pretended to have, who was the supreme Magistrate well known, and whose Power was confessed by and known to all the *Jews* ; whereas he who would assume this Power over us, and will condemn the most pious and devout Observer of all the Actions which he is commanded to perform, and which is the Soul of Religion, (if St. *James* knew what it is) if he cannot conform himself to an Opinion which he hath prescribed ; and who is neither named, nor described to us in the Scheme of our Religion, to have any such Trust, nor acknowledged by us to have such Power. So that we love our Country too well to quit it, and our Countrymen too much to drive them from us ; but if they love their Country so little, as to believe it to be the Sink of ungodly and condemned Souls, which cannot be without a Stench very infectious, and all their Neighbours, Friends, Kindred and Allies, to be the Objects of God's eternal Wrath, because they will not be subject to him, whom he hath not ordained to rule over them ; they have no reason to be fond of such a Residence, but have all the Obligations of Charity towards

wards themselves and others, if they can have any Charity for themselves who are without it for all others, to quit the Country, and abandon and make haste out of that Air which they are sure is so contagious.

It remains then, that we disarm them of one Weapon which this Charity of ours hath put into their Hands, and with which they endeavour to wound us, and have, it may be, prevailed more than by any other Instrument out of their own Magazine : If theirs be a Church in which they may be saved, why should it not be safe, say they, if not desirable, for any who is out of it, to come into it, by changing and renouncing the Religion they are of that is contrary to the other, leave the Church of *England* to get into that of *Rome* ? There are in all Churches, as well as in all Men, many Errors, and all Errors are not of the same Magnitude, nor liable to the same Penalty ; there are Errors which in themselves are so pernicious, that they are not consistent with Piety or Probity ; and there are Errors from which worse Consequences may be drawn than he knows, or intends, or comprehends, who is guilty of the Error ; and the Latter is much less than the Former. Many Men are seduced, or over-reached, or directly couzened into erroneous Opinions, and they are not so criminal as they who pervert and couzen them. In a Word, many Men fall into Errors by Accident or Inadvertence, or want of Understanding, and endeavour all they can to be better informed ; and the Condition of these Men is much better than theirs who seek after them, and affect them as Arguments which may advance their Credit and Reputation, and obstinately defend them to comply with their Ambition, or to improve their Interest. Let us then consider the Difference, even in the reasonable Hope of Salvation, between those who depart from the Church of *England* in which they have been bred, and to which they have made many Vows and Promises ; and those who were never of that Church, nor know the true Constitution of it, but have been educated in the Church of *Rome* ; what the Former wants and are without for their Justification and Excuse, which the Others have ; and what Faults the one must commit in the Act or Circumstance of changing his Religion, which the other is free from ; and then we shall the better discern what Indulgence we may piously hope may be given to the one, and what Severity we may fear justly will be exercised upon the other. I will not say, that which a great Doctor of the Church of *Rome* affirms, and says it is very plain, That it belongeth truly to the Nature of Religion to be propagated in Mankind by Discipline, and Delivery over from Father to Son, and to be embraced in the mere Virtue of such a Reception, through the natural Credulity of Children to their Parents and Teachers ; yet I may say, that the Education is very evil, and the Discipline very loose, and the Parents very negligent, if there are not such Impressions of Religion made by it, be they good or ill, that they will not be defaced, or easily be rooted out by the Infusion from riper Years, especially if their sole Conversation afterwards be confined to Persons of the same Interest and Principles. It is very true, that there may be such Incongruities instill'd in those infant Seasons ; as that God can do, or suffer such Things to flow immediately from himself, as are inconsistent with his Justice, or Mercy, or such Attributes as he hath prescribed to be known by ; or when the Grounds upon which they are taught to believe, are found to be erroneous by the Improvement of natural Science, or are contradicted by those Faculties which God hath made superior to such Infusions, and the natural Judges of the Reason of such Infusions : From such gross Particulars, the very Growth of Years, and the Encrease of Judgment which cannot but accompany those

those Years, with a little reading and revolving, though in a Cell, Men do frequently disentangle themselves without any other Help: as he that hath been periwaded by his Nurse that he was always nourished with black Milk, cannot but believe it, as long as he believes her; but when he comes to find that there is no black Milk, and knows that there was never any, he does not only know that his Nurse abused him, but doth justly suspect the Truth of whatsoever else she hath informed him. All other Things, which do not carry in themselves a visible Disapprovement, are insensibly inculcated by Education, and innocently retained, without obliging the thousandth Part of Christians to make any further Enquiry into the Truth of them, having neither Faculties to judge, nor Reason to believe, that they can be better informed, than they have been by those who bred them: And of this Excuse and Justification that Profelyte is deprived, who leaves the Church of *England*, wherein he hath been educated, to cast himself into the Arms of the Church of *Rome*, where he hath been a Stranger.

The Church of *Rome* is so unreasonably vigilant and jealous of its Flock, that it will not suffer even those who are intelligent and learned, to read any Books which may inform them better; or, if they could prevent it, to converse with those who do not think as they do; and before they qualify any Persons to teach and instruct the People, they are compelled to enter into many Obligations of adhering to Parties, and to Interests, which the Catholick Religion exacts not from them, nor approves; and so they become more of the Faction of the Court of *Rome*, than Sons of the Catholick Church. By all which Artifices they so strictly enclose all their Body, that it is strange that any should break from them, and leave their Communion; if the very Light of Nature, with the Assistance of some Parts of Knowledge, which they can hardly be without, did not sometimes lead Men of more exquisite Faculties out of that Darkness which they affect, and are generally covered with: whereas the Church of *England* conscientiously chuses, not only to permit but to direct her Children to understand as well as to profess their Religion; to search the Scripture, which is the Fountain of Religion. And it may be, in this Latitude to examine, the Persons who are intrusted to propagate the Truth by seasonable and proper Instructions, are not solicitous enough to prepare the Understandings, and to season the Rawness of Youth and Ignorance with those wholesome Instructions, as might make their other Liberty the more useful and beneficial to them; but that is not the Defect of the Church, which takes all possible Care by prescribing sure Guides, and setting us good Land-marks, that they may neither miss nor go out of the Way: It enjoines them to believe all that our Saviour himself or his Apostles have required to be believed, but is more strict to instruct them in the Practice of Christian Virtues, than to perplex and intangle them with dark Notions in Opinions which do not contribute to their Salvation; so that they who forsake that Church, are either guilty of inexcusable Negligence, in not requiring the Information and Instruction that was prepared for them; or they are so well informed, that they could not be prevailed upon but by the Levity and Inconstancy of their Nature, or some depraved Affection which seduces them, to comply with particular Ends and Interests, which is commonly the Introduction to those Changes: both which aggravate the Offence they commit, and makes their Case very different from those, who have been constantly educated in those Errors, without any Opportunity to be better instructed; and their Guilt being greater, they have no reason to expect their Punishment will be the same.

We see then how differently they are qualified to resist Temptation. Let us in the next place, take a View of those ill Actions which they must pass through and be actually guilty of, before they can depart from their own Church, and unite itself to the other: They must withdraw at least a great Part of their Allegiance, which they do not only naturally owe, but have actually sworn to pay to their Sovereign; which increases their Obligation, and adds the Sin of Perjury to the other of Rebellion. Nor can they flatter themselves, or persuade others, that their Faith and Subjection remains as inviolable after they have changed their Religion, as it was before; which is such a Contradiction, that he may as truly say, that he hath not broken his Faith to his first Wife, when he hath married a Second in the Life-Time of the former. How can he pretend an intire Subjection to one Sovereign, to whom he hath promised and vowed it, and profess an Obedience to the Dictates of another Sovereign in Matters of Conscience, whose Authority is excluded by the Laws of the Land, as inconsistent with the other? What Rebellions have we seen raised by the Dictates of that Sovereign over the Conscience, against the Sovereign to whom their natural Allegiance is confessedly due by his own Subjects? and therefore the absolute Exclusion of it, is the only Remedy and Preservative. In the next Place, before they can apostatize from their own Church, in which there is nothing wanting or overabounding that our Saviour prescribed or limited as necessary to a true Church, they must formally renounce it, and condemn it as Anti-christian, in which Salvation cannot be attained; and must believe, or profess to believe, that all the Souls of their Parents, Friends and Kindred, who are dead in that Faith, are actually in Hell, and condemned to everlasting Torments: which is such an impudent Uncharitableness and Presumption as cannot sink into the Heart of a Christian, that hath any Bowels, or retains the least Reverence for the Memory of those Relations; and all Men who do not believe that the Fifth Commandment is abolished, must confess that there is an Honour due to the Memory of our Parents, when they are dead, as there was when they were alive; and the Honour these Men pay to their Memory, is to pronounce that they are damned. It is not to be doubted, but that many of those Apostates will deny that they have done any thing of these Particulars, and are too civil Men to own and justify most of these Outrages; but all the World knows the formal Renunciations which are prepared by the Church of *Rome*, and submitted to by these Profelytes before they can be received and acknowledged for true Members of the Catholick Church: Nor indeed would it be possible to persuade a Man that he cannot be saved in the Church of which he is, without his believing that they are not saved who have died in it already. That which renders all this the more wonderful and absurd, and in so serious a Subject even ridiculous, is, that all this Mutation is for the most part brought to pass in a very short Time, upon very little Warning or Debate, by some Person not half so well known, nor half so knowing as many of those with whom they have long conversed and been familiar, and would be much fitter to resolve any serious Doubts. I speak not of those few Scholars, who by the Inconstancy and Irresolution of their own Nature, the Melancholy of their Fortune, or the Scandal of Mens Behaviours who pretended to be Protestants, which in the late Revolutions had an effect upon too many, deserted the Church in which they had been educated, with more Formality and Leisure, after the reading some Books which probably they had read before, and entertaining some Conferences with Men who knew less than themselves, and much less than many of the contrary

Opinion.

Opinion, with whom they might have conversed; but I speak of the Herd of their Converts in which they triumph so much, which, for the most part, consists of dying Artificers, and old Women and young Girls, vicious and debauched Men and Women, who never understood the Elements of Religion or Virtue; who being told somewhat they never heard before, by a Man they never saw before, of a Way to be saved of which they never thought before, become suddenly new Creatures, say all that the Priest requires them to say of the living or the dead, and never afterwards doubt of their going to Heaven. An *English* Jesuit once told me in *Spain*, not without a little Vanity, of a good Fortune that befel him in *London*, which he should never forget, and for which he often gave God thanks; That a Maid-Servant in the House where he lodged told him one Day that she had an Uncle, an old Man, a Carpenter, who was very sick, and she believed he would die, and therefore pray'd him that he would go to him and save his Soul; the charitable Father was willing to perform his Office, if she could procure him Admittance to her Uncle in private; the Maid told him, that his Wife and all his Children, who lived in the same House with him, were all Protestants, and did not love the *Papists*; but that she would go with him the next Morning, and that he should pretend to be a Physician, and by that means he should be alone with him: The Maid was as good as her Word; and when no body else was in the Room, he saw the old Man was very weak, and found he knew little of Religion, and thereupon he asked him, whether he did desire to be saved? which he seemed very heartily to wish; and thereupon he informed him shortly of what was fit and necessary, and told him in what manner he must confess and abjure all his former Errors and Heresies; which the good Man did with more Pregnancy then he could expect from the Weakness he was in and from his former Life; all which he imputed to the wonderful Grace of God; upon which he absolved him, and reconciled him to the Church, whereupon the poor Man appeared very joyful; and the Maid told him, that he died the next Morning very comfortably; and the good Father said, he never called this to his Remembrance, as he did very often, but it filled his Heart with Joy: And it is very probable that the greatest Part of their Profelytes are of this Man's Talent, and as easily caught as he was.

These are the Tragical Professions and Concessions which are the Fore-runners and Preface to every Man's deserting the Church of *England*, before he can be received into that of *Rome*; every Particular whereof contains some heinous Sin which he is bound to commit, upon a probable Hope of Salvation, of which he might have been more assured without the charging his Conscience with those Sins: and all which must render his Condition more hazardous than theirs, who have stupidly rested in the Ignorance of their Education, and acquiesced in that Religion which their Friends have chosen for them, and their Country enjoins them to profess and practise; and distinguishes those who leave the Church of *England*, from those who have been bred in the other. And together with this they loose that which is the greatest Confidence and Comfort of Religion, the Certitude of it, that they know clearly and without Dispute, what they are to believe, and what they are to do: We all can and do with a good Conscience pronounce the Creed, which we are enjoined by the Church to believe; we do understand those twelve Articles, and heartily conform to them; and we do understand what Duties God and the Church have prescribed to us, which we are sure, according to the Faculties we have, we are able heartily to endeavour to observe and practise: But I much doubt, whether our new Convert can believe,

lieve, or whether he be informed he must believe the Article of the Council of *Trent*, and the Bull to boot, which he is bound as absolutely to believe as the other Twelve, and to do many other Things which he was free from before; and in which the *English* Catholicks Condition is much harder than other Mens: for no other Catholicks are bound to believe and do more than is contained in those Articles which are received and accepted by the State under which they live; but the *English* Catholicks, because the Crown hath accepted and received no Part of them (which is confessed to be the only Obligation to submit to any Council how General soever) are bound to submit to the Whole; which would at least oblige them to read them over, and a little to reflect upon them, before they enter into that Engagement. But their Case is yet much worse, by the absolute Uncertainty and Impossibility to understand all that they are to believe, and all that they are to do, without an intire Submission and Obedience to which their Hope of Salvation is as desperate as it was before they were reconciled; they must have the same Resignation to what the Church shall hereafter order and determine, as to what it hath already done; which makes the Price of Salvation so much dearer than it was in the Time of our Forefathers, by how much we are obliged to believe and do more than they were bound to believe and do: And it is a common Answer, when we object that many of the Fathers were of a contrary Opinion, that the Church had not then declared and determined the Matter; and when we put them in mind that one of their own Popes was of this or that Opinion, they hold it a very satisfactory Answer, that he was then but a Cardinal, and that it was before he was Pope. So that the Absurdity as well as the Uncertainty of this Obligation is so great, that it is impossible to comply with it, but by getting that unnatural Jurisdiction over his Will and his Conscience, which *Bellarmino* professes he had attained to, and to which Fortress all other Men are forced to retire upon the Defence of this Argument, That if the Church declare white to be black, he will readily believe that white is black. And to such a Man no more is to be said, than that he hath reason to thank God that it hath not declared him to be a Woman; which would have given him some Cause of Perplexity. However, it were to be wished, that this slippery sort of Men, who shift their Religion as though it were only an Act of Curiosity to improve their Understanding and mend their Breeding, were well informed before-hand of the Wildness, and Unlimitedness of the new Obligations they are to enter into; which could not but awaken their Conscience to make some Reflections upon the Steadiness of that Church which they are tempted to abjure, and the prodigious Tottering and Instability of that they are to enter into.

But the Truth is, the Emissaries of the Church of *Rome*, which are commonly employed upon those Missions for the perverting of Souls, never make the true Price known to them who are to pay for the Commodity they are to buy; but shew them some specious Parts of it, which may most work upon those Affections and Appetites they discover them to be most governed by, and conceal all that might shock the Integrity of their Understanding, or some Interest they might have a Mind to cherish. I met once in *Flanders* a Divine of the Church of *England*, who had convers'd much and was well known in the Court, tho' of no eminent Observation in the Church; I told him it was generally reported, I hoped without Cause, that he was inclined to change his Religion, and to become of the *Roman* Communion; he answer'd me with some Hesitation, that he had very great Esteem and Reverence for the Church of *England*, in which

he had been bred, and that the barbarous Persecution and Violence under which it lay oppressed, and upon the Matter extinguished, had made him revolve and reflect upon Things which he had heretofore more perfunctorily considered, and to enquire and examine many other Particulars which he had never known and thought of before; and that upon the whole Matter, since the Church in which he had been educated now ceased to be, he was resolved to live in a Christian Communion, and therefore it was probable that he might enter into that of the *Roman*. I told him, he must have a worse Opinion of his own Church, before he could be received into the other; for he must publickly and literally renounce all its Doctrine as heretical, and put off and disclaim the Orders he had received in it, before he could be acknowledged and received in that Church. He replied with more Warmth, that he was resolved to do neither, and was well assured that neither would be required from him; that they with whom he conversed, had a great Value for the Church of *England*, because it retained so much of Order and Antiquity; and that there would be no need to quit his Orders, which he was resolved never to do. And they told him very true, for if he had no Mind to be in Orders, no body would press him to it; but that would not do his Business, nor could he enjoy those Benefits and Advantages which he was to enjoy from his Conversion, without being in Orders; and then he was compelled to do both, which he was so positively resolved never to consent to: so far he was from discerning the Depth of the Water he was to wade through. They who have read Mr. *Cressy's* first Edition of his *Exomologesis*, in which he published the Motives that prevailed with him to leave the Church, find some modest Expressions of the Church of *England*, and Esteem of the Doctors and Scholars of it, amongst whom he had indeed many Friends; he inserts a Subscription and Declaration, which, he said, all *Roman* Catholick Subjects would make of their indispensable Fidelity to the King; he said, many Things were published by particular Men as Catholick Doctrines, which the Church did not enjoin; as in the Point of Purgatory, he did believe, nor did the Church oblige him to believe more, that it is a Place of Acquiescence, where the Soul rests without Pain. I do verily think that he believed all this at that Time, and the Book was licensed to be printed by two or three Doctors of the *Sorbonne*, whereof Dr. *Holding* was one; but this Temper was so little liked, besides his Oversight in the Point of Purgatory, for want of being well read in the Council of *Trent*, that there was a second Edition presently set out, wherein both the Recognition for the Catholicks, and that of Purgatory, and many other Particulars, are quite left out; and all the contemptuous Expressions of the Church of *England* are inserted, and more bitter and virulent Invectives against the Clergy of it, than the ancient *Jesuits* did heretofore make use of. Of which I took Notice to Mr. *Cressy* afterwards at *Paris*; and for which, out of Countenance, he made me no other Answer, than that many Exceptions had been taken to his first Edition; and that by his Superior's Command he had put it in the Hands of such a Person, whom he named, to be again set out; and that such Things were left out and others put in as they thought fit, and of which he had no Notice till the second Edition was published. To such scandalous Reproaches are these Profelytes exposed, by those who first corrupt and seduce them, without letting them know the utmost that will be expected from them, until they are gone too far to retire; and then, warmed and chafed between Anger and Shame, they first contract an Impudence, and then an Animosity against those whom they have injured and provoked, and think it the best

Manifestation of their Zeal to their new Religion, to prosecute their old with all the Scandals and Calumnies their new Adoption can suggest to them; and which graver and more confirmed Catholicks, who have always adhered to their Religion, decline and detest. In a Word, they who think themselves not safe in a Church, in which there are no Errors or Corruptions admitted and practised, must make all the haste they can to the Church Triumphant; for in the Militant they will find little Time to rest, but may wander through all Christian Kingdoms without Satisfaction, and probably may at last be compell'd to sit still in as insecure a Station, as that from whence they began their Journey. Prudent and pious Men know, that they may live very conscientiously, and serve God very acceptably, in a Church where some Errors are believed, and it may be taught, and in which some Incongruities and Indecencies are practised, and it may be countenanced, and continue themselves neither corrupted in the one or in the other; and that a Man may with a better Conscience remain in that Communion, than go about to reform it by Ways which he is not qualified to put in practice: but he can very hardly, with the same Testimony of Conscience, or the same Tranquility of Mind, depart from that Church, because of the Errors and Corruptions which he thinks to be in it, and chuse another Church which he is not sure is free from all; less, if he himself cannot but discern as gross Corruptions, and in the Consequence more pernicious and scandalous, in that to which he is going, as in the other from which he is departing; and least of all, if he must be obliged to commit Indecencies, to subscribe or acknowledge Untruths, and profess Malice and Animosity against the one, to make his way into the other: All which they must be guilty of, who depart from the Church of *England* to enter into the *Roman*. Nor let them please themselves with that State-distinction, between that Church and that Court, of which all the Catholick Princes and States in *Christendom* have so long and so ineffectually complained; if the Church and the State be like *Hippocrates's* Twins, that they always laugh and cry together, and cannot be divided from each other, it will be necessary for those who receive Damage and Mischief from their so inseparable Union, and are qualified with Authority and Power to make a Reformation, that they pull them a-sunder, though with the Expiration of both.

To conclude: I must end as I began, and desire those of our own Church not to make a Plaister too wide and too broad for the Sore it is to cover, in the particular Contest with our own Countrymen, upon what hath relation to Conscience and Religion, and in which the Honour of the King, and the Peace and Security of the Kingdom, are only concerned. Let us not enlarge the Controversy then, by taking more into the Argument than is absolutely necessary to the End of it; and by which, tho' we do not make our Cause the worse, we make the Number of the Enemies the greater to oppose it. But since it is a singular Case, and concerns only individual Persons, let us so proceed with them, that as they are a Sect by themselves, so all Catholick Kings may look on unconcerned, and find no War made on their Religion, of which we do not take upon us to judge. And if the Pope, who is the sole Monarch they acknowledge, and who disclaims all Correspondence with the King, and at the same time will take upon him to govern his Subjects, and who in truth may think himself bound in Honour to defend them, who without Fear of God or Man so obstinately adhere to his particular Interest; I say, if he thinks fit to make it his Quarrel, we shall well enough defend our selves against his Artillery of all sorts, Spiritual and Temporal, against his Excommunications, Bulls, Deprivations,

privations, and Jurisdictions ; and it is very probable, that all other Catholick Princes and States may revolve and reflect upon so many Particulars in the matter of the Contest, and the manner of the Prosecution of it, which may concern themselves, that they will rather endeavour to reduce him to that Sobriety of Understanding, and to that Modesty of Pretences which are necessary for the Peace and Preservation of *Christendom*, than by siding with him, contribute Materials to a Fire that may burn their own Palaces, as it hath too often and too furiously sometimes flamed there. Since all other Experiments have been tried for the composing and suppressing these Domestick affected Distempers against a Party in our own Bowels, which will set their own Conscience against the Conscience of the State, to the apparent Hazard of the Peace thereof ; let us have recourse for Remedy to the Law, which we have not yet try'd, and which must be submitted to by all Subjects. We find that Conferences, Disputations and Books are so far from extinguishing the Fire, that they do not allay the Heat of it ; on the contrary, they raise the Spirit to a ruder Blaze, and that People to an Insolence, the enduring whereof is dishonourable to Church and State. What we principally contend upon, the Fathers knew nothing of, who preached all Submission and Obedience, even to Death, under Heathen Emperors ; nor were any Christians known or heard of, in the Ages in which they liv'd, who durst avow a Disobedience to their Princes, or to introduce an Authority superior to theirs in their own Dominions. In other Controversies, both Sides with equal Confidence appeal to them, and profess to be equally supported by them ; they cite the same Places and the same Pages to either of their purposes, and differ as much upon the Interpretation of them ; they accuse each of falsifying Quotations, when it often falls out that they conclude from different Editions : besides that, they frequently find Contradictions between several of the Fathers, as they are of different Senses one from another ; and as they seem to be of one Opinion by what they say in one Place, and of another in what they say in another Place, and upon another Occasion ; nor doth either Side acquiesce, or pretend to be of the same Opinion with any one Father in all that he delivers. So that there is no Hope of any Concord between us from any Determination of the Fathers ; and they who most cry up their Authority, and pretend to be entirely governed by them, do in truth most contradict their Opinions and undervalue their Persons. General Councils are of so sacred Estimation and Reverence, that neither Party hath the Impudence to deny a total Resignation to them ; and by the Law of *England*, whoever doth deny any one Doctrine that is established by the Four first General Councils, is declared a Heretick, and prosecuted as such : But neither of those Councils meddles with any of our Differences ; but they have others which would serve their turns, which were not called impartially to examine the Ground and Reason of any Opinions, but positively to condemn those who believed or maintained them, with Circumstances so gross and uningenuous, that they are not received or acknowledged in the Dominions of many Catholick Princes ; so that no body can look upon those as General Councils : There is an End then of any Hope of Concord from that Authority. The Pope indeed might do very much towards a perfect Reconciliation ; but it must be so wholly at his own Charge, that it is not reasonable to expect it from him ; though he would have his own Spiritual Office invade and oppress the Temporalities of all other Princes, he is well content that his Temporal Authority shall so totally subdue his Spiritual Function, as not to suffer it to perform any Part of the Office of

a Catholick or Christian Father; and accounts it the highest Sacrilege to part with the least Privilege or Authority, which the worst of his Predecessors was ever possess'd of, or usurped or extorted by the highest Tyranny, from the most injured and oppress'd Princes. There is no Remedy then to resort to, but established Laws, or Arms; the latter might cure the Disease, but it must be by killing the Patient, and it would much sooner extirpate the Persons than root out either of their Opinions; and there is no Cause to employ Arms where the Laws can exact Obedience. Thither then we ought to repair, and employ those Laws which the Piety of the Church and the Wisdom of the State have prescribed for Reduction of all refractory Persons to the Performance of their Duty. If it be alledged, that that Expedient hath been likewise tried, and proved as unsuccessful as either of the other; the strictest Execution of the severest Laws hath produced no Reformation. It may be so; nor will I say, that it may be a stricter and more constant Execution of them would have done it. I do not wish it, I do pray against it; and probably the as strict Execution of the mildest might have done more good. But if neither the one or the other be proper for the Work, let new be enacted, which may be obeyed or vindicated; and let not the State be without fit Laws to secure itself, and to provide for all Things which are necessary thereunto; and an End put to all Disputes by positive Determination; and that no Men may enjoy Benefit and Protection from Part of the Laws, who will not pay Obedience to the Whole: the suffering whereof accuses the Government of Impotence, and threatens it with Ruin.



A DIALOGUE between A. an old Courtier, B. an old Lawyer, C. an old Soldier, D. an old Country Gentleman, and E. an old Alderman, of the want of Respect due to Age.

B. **Y**OU are too blame, very much too blame, to give so much Countenance to the ill Manners and Insolence of Youth. If you were a Father your self, you would find your Children grow saucy enough in contradicting you without Encouragement; and I rather expected you would have saved me the Trouble, by your reprehending my Son for his Presumption, than by taking his Part, invited him to contradict me; a young saucy Boy!

C. You are too cholerick, in truth too peevish, and drive that Respect and Duty from you, that would cast it self at your Feet. That young saucy Boy is above Thirty Years of Age, and discoursed with that Modesty with you, and with that Submission when he opposed your Opinion, that it was impossible to use more. Your self gave the Occasion of Debate, and in a Profession in which you have brought him up; and he replied to what you said in Matter of Fact, and it is probable that his Memory may be better than yours; and this was his great Sauciness.

B. Sir, I will not contend with you; but I will make him to know that it is Sauciness in him to pretend to have a better Memory than his Father.

C. You will teach him many Things which I hope he will not learn of you. Why are you not angry that he is a handsomer Man than you? for so he is by much. As old as I am, I would marry to Morrow, if I thought I could get such a Son, who would be as wise as he is, after I am dead. My Friend, you are not grateful enough to God for such a Son.

A. I like the young Gentleman well; he is very forward: But he was too bold to contradict his Father; which, let it be with what Modesty and Submission soever, as you call it, is direct Sauciness, and not to be endured. Why should he dare to think he knows any Thing as well as his Father, who is so much Elder? Nor was it well done of you to take his Part. I tell you, my Masters, we are old Men, and ought not to give such Examples; Youth is heady and proud, and Age hath lost all the Reverence that is due to it. I have lived now in the Court near Forty Years, and there is great Difference between the Respect we paid when we were young, and that which we receive now we are old. I assure you, young Fellows, who have not been there one Year, tread every Day upon my Toes, and are willing to strike up my Heels. Upon my Word, we all ought to join together to discountenance and suppress their petulant Humour, and not to assist and countenance their pragmatical Over-weenings.

D. Indeed they need no Spurs; they are head-strong enough without them, and can hardly be restrained within any Compass. I was in hope that there had been more Manners in the Court; but I assure you, in the Coun-

try, the Pride and Insolence of young Men is so great and intolerable, that they make us, who governed their Fathers, ridiculous in all we say or do. When we tell them what was done Forty Years since, they say it was not wisely done; we tell them what the Law is, and they tell us what it should be; and that which is called Good-Breeding hath undone all the Gentry, and all the Houses of the Kingdom. I have three Sons, the eldest I will be sure to keep at Home, that he shall not have the Temptation to think he is wiser than I am, or ever dare to differ from me in Opinion; the other Two, because they are to live by their Wits, let them think as well of themselves as they please; one of them I have sent to the University, where he is Fellow of a College, the other into the Inns of Court; and they have both gotten such an Opinion of their own Knowledge, that I am scarce Master of my own House when they come Home; which I seldom suffer, they so tire and vex me with their Disputes and impudent Contradictions.

B. You see now, my fighting Friend, you are the only Champion for the over-haughty Youth; all the rest are of my Opinion, for I am confident the honest Alderman observes too much of that unruly Spirit of which we complain; and I least expected the Opposition from you, who are of a Profession so jealous and severe, that you will endure no Disputes and Contradictions; he who contradicts an Order of yours, shall die for it; you who are so careful of your own Honour and Security, should not be so indulgent to Mutiny, which is nothing but Contradiction in other Mens Houses.

E. I am not very ambitious to bear a Part in the Argument, because I see you are great Enemies to Contradiction, and the noble Colonel is very well able to deal with you all. Yet that my Silence may not persuade you that I am of your Opinion, which I think very unreasonable, I will tell you, I believe you all to be in the wrong; and I do heartily thank this Man of War for his so seasonable supporting an excellent young Man from being very unjustly oppressed by the froward and indecent Passion of an angry old Man, though his Father.

A. Go thy ways, thou shalt have a Colours in his own Regiment.

C. Well Gentlemen, I will propose a Thing to you, which methinks should not displease you. The Alderman has given us a good Dinner, and this is a pleasant Arbour we are in; we are all old Friends, it may be Five older have hardly been found together, for he that is youngest amongst us is above Seventy; let us sit down, and without Passion, seriously weigh and debate, whether in truth this present Age be faulty, in not having that Regard and Veneration for old Men which it ought to have. (2.) By whose Default, or from what ground such unnatural Disrespect doth proceed. (3.) What is the proper Remedy, and how this necessary Reverence may be repaired. Upon these three Questions we may well spend two Hours, without considering our Country Friend's Method and Reason for the Education of his Children, which may entertain us another Time. In the mean Time, methinks you should not believe me very prodigal of any Rights and Privileges, which the Prerogative of my Age hath justly intitled me to.

A. It is well proposed, and we are well content.

B. I then, who it seems by my Choler have given occasion to this Discourse, will begin, and observe the Method you propose, tho' I suppose our Time will be most usefully spent upon the Second and Third Questions, upon the Causes, and upon the Remedies of this Defection; for of the Fact itself,

itself, that there is a wonderful Disregard, if not apparent Contempt of Age in this insolent World, I suppose is so notorious, that it cannot be long a Doubt among us; except it be a Doubt which all young Men seem to have resolved, whether there be any Reverence due to Age: which from the Beginning of the World to the Time in which our Fathers died, was never made a Question. It was an Injunction in the *Levitical Law*, *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary Head, and honour the Face of the old Man*, Lev. xix. 30. which is no more than the Law of Nature hath taught all Nations, the aged and the grey Hairs ever found Reverence from all People; Beggars find it not only in the Charity, but even in the Civility of those who relieve them. To reckon up the several Prerogatives which in all Times have been confessed to be due to the Aged, is unnecessary here. I appeal to you all, to the Memories and Observations even of those two Advocates for Youth, whether we receive the same Reverence from our Children which we paid to our Fathers. I would not have you think that I reflect upon the Forwardness of my Son at Dinner, which I will now confess to you made me more angry than it ought to have done. Anger is an Infirmary of Age, and I thank God I have no cause to complain of his want of Duty; but I desire you call your own Memories to Account, of the Resignation, the Deference the Youth of that Time had for the Presence of old Men, the Silence they kept the Modesty and even Trembling with which they spoke before them, and the intire Submission with which they always acquiesced in their Judgment and Determination. What *Job* pronounced was then held good Divinity; *With the Ancient is Wisdom, and in Length of Days is Understanding*, Job xii. 12. I do not take it to be a Text limited to that Age, but a Testimony that will continue to the End of the World; and I do in truth believe this general Decay of Duty and Reverence towards Age, to be one of those Fore-runners of the last Days, which the Apostle foretold; and since the World grows so much worse and worse, it is pity there should not be a speedy End of it. Alas! where is that Awe, that Silence, that Modesty, which you remember amongst the Youth of this Nation? If Accidents or Business brings you where they are, do you find they are in Awe of you? Is the Noise the less? Do they hearken to what you say with Attention? Do they consider it with Regard, or reply to it with any Modesty? It is well if you escape Reproach; and being told that you carry still about you the Vice and Superciliousness of the Age in which you were born, that you affect a Morosity that keeps you from looking with Justice upon the Vivacity and Earliness of the present Time; if your Experience doth not supply you with Evidence enough of this kind, but that it remains still a Question, whether there be such a Decay as we complain of, it is Time to renounce the Use of our Senses, and to give up our selves as Wards to our Children, for want of Wit to govern them.

A. It is Time indeed; and if we do not do it quickly, it is well if they do not call upon us to make such a Resignation. What do you call that Country, where the Children might bury their Fathers, when they came to such an Age, whether they were dead or no, for presuming to live so long? And I remember well the Story in *Philip de Comines*, of the old Duke of *Guelders*, that when Endeavours were used to reconcile him, and his Son who had rebelled against him, and many great Concessions were proposed to the Son, so that the old Duke might peaceably continue the Government during his Life; the Son answered, that his Father had continued the Government already above Fifty Years, which was long enough, and that it was Time for him now to enter upon it; and that he would rather cast his

his Arms about the Neck of his Father, and thereby be thrown together to the Bottom of a deep Well, than that he should enjoy the Government one whole Day longer. And if there be a Doubt still whether this rebellious Spirit reigns in these Days, let us look on till every Man finds it in his own House, and then I hope we shall be convinced.

D. I am not willing to change the Question, which I conceive is not concerning the Piety of Children towards their Parents, the want whereof is a Disease, it may be of the late general Licence, through the Neglect of Domestick Discipline and Education, and some rude Principles infused into the Minds of Children in the Rebellion; but I do not think that is it of which we all complain; for without doubt the Piety of Children well educated, is as signal now towards their Parents, as it hath ever been. Our present Argument is, that universal Decay of Respect and Reverence which is due to Age itself, not from the Children of our Body, which some collateral Considerations of Fear, if not Love, will in some Degree still retain; but that innate Regard which Mankind ought to pay to grey Hairs, as to their natural Parents, for the Old are always Parents to the Young. The Spirit of God itself could not make a more terrible Description of a People into whose Hands the Children of *Israel* should be given up, if they disobeyed the Lord their God, than when he threatned them with, *a Nation of fierce Countenance, that should not regard the Person of the Old, Deut. xxviii. 50.* There was then no Nation known, no People so fierce and brutish, as to have no regard for the Persons of the Old. There was ever that Attraction and inherent Majesty in the Countenance of Age, that no Superiority of Title, Quality, or Dominion, drew more Esteem and Reverence from the Beholders, than the very Aspect of a venerable old Man; all his Words were hearkened to as Oracles, and his Person looked upon as the Representation of a Deity. How many could we name, who in our Memory received this Veneration; and the Decay of this is that which we do and may justly lament; not for our selves, we can live without it and govern our selves and what belongs to us, by the Rules of our own Experience, and what we have received from our Fore-fathers; but for that Decay of Wisdom and Understanding, which must attend the haughty Humour of young Men, their Over-weening and Confidence in their own Judgments, and undervaluing all that Age and Experience can offer; of the Truth of which we have too much Evidence in the Country; and truly, if it still remains a Doubt in the Court and in the City, you are much more happy than your Neighbours are: I wish we could find a Cure, we are very sensible of the Disease.

A. My honest Countryman hath spoken well, and to the Purpose; and though I had a Mind to shew you somewhat of my Reading, I meant to have concluded upon my own Knowledge all that he hath said. I have lived now in the Court above forty Years, and if I should tell you that there is the same Modesty there, that young Men behave themselves there as they did then, you would all laugh at me; they do no more understand the Order and Dignity of a Court, than they understand *Latin*, and yet if there should any Place fall there to Morrow, and I should sue for it, some impudent Monsieur of Twenty Three, or Twenty Four, would think he had wrong if he were not preferred before me; you talk of Modesty, there hath been no Man seen to blush in the Court since the King's Return.

B. If we had but our Alderman's Vote, who surely cannot differ with us in this first Proposition, that there is that Absence of Respect towards Age we complain of, except there be more Modesty in his Ward than in

the other Parts of the City, we should hear what our Man of War would say of the Humility and Modesty of the Camp, and where no Question Age meets with no Affront, except it be for running away.

E. You were better excuse me from bearing a Part in this Discourse, which I cannot manage with that Passion and Concernment that you have done ; yet I am as much against you upon this general Question, as I was upon the Particular which was the Occasion of the Debate : You know I am a Gentleman, and a younger Brother of a good Family, and I spent some Years in the University before my Father (who, it may be, discerned some of that overweening Spirit in me which you condemn) sent me to the City, where, with God's Blessing, I have lived ever since, and it may be with the more Ease, because I have conformed myself to *Solomon's Counsel, Say not to thyself that the former Times were better than these, for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this* : You see it was a Disease in his Time, and hath never been cured since. From the Time I was a Boy, to this Hour, old Men have complained how much the Times are worse than they were, and how much Old Age was despised ; and you are now handling the same Text, and magnifying your selves for the Reverence you paid your Fathers, when I remember some of you were as weary of them as any of your Children can be of you. You say, Age hath lost all the Submission that was heretofore paid to it, by the proud and over-weening Humour of young Men, who believe they understand all : I say, venerable Age, grave and wise old Men, have the same or greater Reverence paid to them, than they had in those former Times ; and weak, and willful, and impertinent old Men were as little respected then as they are now. Young Men are proud and over-weening, and so they were then ; and if they do believe they understand more than in truth they do, you are as much in the wrong in thinking they understand less than indeed they do ; you shall do well to declare at what Years Men may be old enough to speak before you, and wise enough to follow their own Dictates, though they differ from yours. You all talk as if Age had such an attractive Beauty, that all Men must fall down at the Feet of every one that is old ; and yet there are some, if you will believe *Solomon, Who though they live long, they shall yet be nothing regarded, and though they live long they shall be without Honour*, *Wisd. iii. 17.* Men must have somewhat else than Wrinkles, to find Reverence ; for my Part, I keep good Quarter with the Youth, and live companionably with my Children ; and I find great Benefit as well as Ease by it, and that they are in many Occasions wiser than myself, at least that I am wiser by conferring with them.

A. Nay, then thou shalt live and die with the Boys by my Consent ; thou art sure madder then the Colonel himself, or else as thou hast called us Fools, so he will call us Knaves.

C. No Gentlemen, he and I have too much Esteem of you to think you either ; and methinks you should believe, that neither of us are willing to part with any of the Privilege the Number of Years, very little inferior to either of yours, may intitle us to. The Truth is, the Alderman hath said very much in few Words, and hath prevented me by speaking much that I meant to have said : which I do not understand to have been with any purpose to lessen the Reverence that is due to Age, or to excuse the Follies and Presumptions of Youth ; but to shew that the one is as great, and the other no greater than they have been heretofore. And because I shall not enlarge my self upon this first Question, which hath been sufficiently handled, till I come to speak upon the other Two ; give me leave to

speak a little in our Excuse, and to shew you how it comes that the Alderman and I seem more inclined to young Men, and to have a better Esteem of them than you have; which proceeds from the necessary Conversation the several Conditions of our Life do oblige us to have with them: and so we come to know them better than you do, who very rarely have any even and equal Commerce with them, but make a perpetual War upon them, for that which is not their Fault, for being no older; and it may be the Injustice of that Treatment may lessen the Reverence which they would be willing to pay to you. My good Friend of the Country tells you how he lives with his own Children, and I believe converses no more with his Neighbours of their Age, till he finds some young Man sitting upon the Bench by him, who takes upon him, and thinks he understands as much as he; and this irreconciles him to all the Youth of the Time, for their Pride and Presumption. Our Courtier there lives in a Crowd; and because there is more Noise made there now than was when he knew it first, he thinks there is less State, and so keeps to his Form; and if he sees two or three confident Men preferred, he believes there is no Modesty left, and declines the Company of all young Fellows; and if they laugh, he concludes they laugh at him; and finds out some Body of his own Time, that they may together inveigh against the Impudence of the Age. I wonder most at the Lawyer, who being obliged every Day to converse with younger Men, and observes them to do the same that he used to do before them, I expected he should have been a more equal Judge of their Behaviour; but the Disdain of being over-topped by Boys (as he reckons all who are under the Degree of Benchers) and some one young Man's good Fortune in being preferred before him, doth so far transport him, that he never considers his Parts, but imputes his Promotion to his Presumption; and is angry with all Men of the same Age, because they have a Mind to attain to the same Success; and calls it the want of Modesty in the Age: Whereas the Alderman and I (though of different Professions) spend all our Time with younger People, observe their Sobriety and their Industry, and have Help from them in Things which many times we cannot do our selves. He observes a Pregnancy in his Apprentice, which he cherishes and instructs; he finds him faithful and diligent, and that his own Estate is improved by his Labour, Skill, and Fidelity; whilst he does him good, he receives Benefit by him, and discerns all the Marks in him of a Man that will prosper and be rich; and he takes so much Joy in nothing, as to see an Alderman of his breeding. We, in our Profession, see no brave Action done, whereof the Officers it may be have the Honour, which is not performed by the Courage and Valour of the young Men; they are undaunted when it may be we look pale, and overcome those Difficulties of which we often despair; if they come to have Commands, which intitle them to be present at Councils, as often times very young Men arrive to, if they advise too briskly, they are easily convinced, and converted by Men of more Experience, except they apprehend it proceeds from Fear, which it may be they are too much Enemies of; we delight in the Sprightliness of their Humour, and Gaiety of their Nature, by which we often refresh our own Morosity, and apply some Remedy to those Infirmities, which Age insensibly brings upon us: We love their Company, as you love Wine, to warm our Blood; and they are willing we should believe, that their Vanities are allayed, their Levities corrected, and their Understandings improved, by our Conversation, Counsel and Example; and so we do as Mankind ought to do, administer to one anothers Infirmities; we put Water into their Wine, and we warm our selves at

at their Fire. But I have been too long upon this Digression, and will make you amends, by being very silent, till you have spoken to the other Two Propositions, the Cause and the Remedy; and then it is possible I may again resume somewhat that I have already said: and in the End, it may be, whatever you think now, I may not appear so over-indulgent to the Follies and Exorbitances of Youth, and the Over-boldness of young Men; but I would not have the Licence and Excess of Persons, through want of Education and Example, charged as a Reproach upon the Age; which to me seems little less than a Charge upon Providence.

B. The Colonel hath spoken very well, and said much to the Purpose: but by the way observe, that we have his Vote to the first Proposition; for he would never put us to discourse of the Cause and the Remedy of a Mischief that is not in Being. Indeed the Alderman had routed us out, and sent us packing for a Company of Sots, who had lost our Memory and our Wit together, for which he paid us with the Judgment of *Solomon*; but the best is, it was but *Apocrypha*, and we will fine him another Dinner for flattering the Boys. We will take it then for granted, as in Truth there is too much Cause to do, that young Men have not that Modesty, indeed that good Manners towards Age, as we paid towards it when we were young. I think we cannot be deceived in this Conclusion by Partiality or Frowardness in our Nature, or by want of Memory, which the honest Alderman suspects us for; and therefore I shall freely tell you my Opinion both of the Cause from whence this Mischief proceeds, and of the Remedy that ought to be applied to reform it.

A. Sure, Sir, you may proceed, for there can be no more Question of the Matter of Fact, than there can be whether they wore as many Ribbons in Queen *Elizabeth's* Time as they do now. I do not wish that the Alderman's Memory were no better in remembring what Money Men owe him, than it is concerning Mens Behaviour when he was young. I am sure I had been in the Court seven Years before I durst speak in the Presence of a Privy-Counsellor, and before I ever saw the Inside of either of the Galleries, or Drawing-Rooms; when Men thought they were well rewarded, if after three or four Years diligent and expensive waiting upon the King in the Court, and in Progresses, they were admitted to be Gentlemen-Waiters, or Gentlemen of the Privy-Chamber in Ordinary; now there is not a Man that comes to the Court, doth not promise himself to be of the Bed-Chamber within a Year, and it is an even Lay speaks to the King himself for the Place, and thinks himself disobliged if he be denied. Oh! it is a modest Age.

D. I would fain know of the Alderman, what Age he was of before he put on his Hat in the Presence of his Father, or when his elder Brother had that Liberty. I am sure I was married, and had Children, and was two or three and thirty Years old, before ever I sat covered in my Father's Sight, and then it was only at Meals; whilst he lived, I never put on my Hat in his Presence, but at those Seasons; and if God keep me in my Wits, I will never suffer any Son of mine to use me with less Reverence, if he means to be the better for me: Now Children are taught from their Cradles to keep on their Hats, and not to put them off but when they begin their Dance. Since I came to Town, I met a Friend of mine walking in the Fields with a young Stripling, who was loud, and laughing, full of Motion with his Hands and Legs; and when I came near them, my Friend saluted me very kindly, but the other took not the least Notice of me: I asked who he was? my Friend told me, he was his Son, newly returned from

from Travel; and then told his Son that I was his old true Friend, and bid him salute me; upon which the *Monsieur* put off his Hat, touched his Hair, and stooped as if he meant to have untied my Shoes, or to have run his Head between my Legs, and assured me that he was my very humble Servant: I took no Notice of his Compliment, but told my Friend, that I hoped he had other Children, and was sorry that they had no wiser a Father, and so prosecuted my Business without saying one Word more; so full of Indignation I was to see the Folly of the one, and the Presumption of the other: This is one of the Alderman's Form, who lives companionably with his Children, and this Companionableness of theirs may well be looked upon as one principal Introduction of the Mischief of which we complain.

E. Gentlemen, it seems you are hard put to it, when to maintain your Assertion you are glad to make use of such low and pitiful Instances. Our Courtier thinks fit to libel the Court itself, that he may reproach the young Men who frequent it; if Modesty be no more regarded there, who can find Fault with Men for being impudent? They come thither to be bred, and if Confidence and Presumption be the Mode, who can blame Men for seeking Preferment by such Means by which it is most like to be obtained? I hope, all Ages have used those Stratagems. Our Country Justice is forced to rake into the Rubbish of our Fore-Fathers woful Pedantry, the Memory whereof ought to be inclosed in their Monuments; he remembers how long it was before he put on his Hat before his Father; I believe indeed it was very late, by his putting it off so seldom since, and so ungracefully: but, Gentlemen, do you believe that Fathers had the more true Reverence from their Children, for keeping them at that absurd Distance? Did they not abhor the Company of their Fathers, and chuse to be with their Men, that they might govern? Can there be any modern Education so wretched and pernicious as that was, which was the Effect of that paternal Morosity? Consider with your selves what an excellent Method you affect towards Reformation. The Courtier would have all Preferments conferred by Seniority; by which he would be sure to be Lord-Chamberlain, and we should have a very grave Court; which would be as unnatural, and as unwelcome as a cold Harvest: and our Country Justice would have none sit upon the Bench till they have grey Hairs, for they should not put on their Hats till then; I expect anon he will appoint their Hair to be cut to the Length of their Ears. I pray, Sir, proceed in earnest to the Cause, and to the Remedy of the Mischief you complain of; I do not intend to give you any more Interruption.

B. I will obey you; nor shall all the Alderman's facetious Reproaches divert me from the insisting upon the ill Education of the Youth of this Age, in sending them Abroad to travel before they know any thing of their own Country, nor what they ought to observe Abroad: By Abroad and Travel, I only intend *France*; for I think our young Gallants are only sent thither so young: where, by knowing nothing of Religion before they go, they return perverted to the *Roman*, or, which is the Corruption of the best Company there, with an impudent Contempt of Religion, and all Things which are sacred; looking upon all Forms of Divine Worship, and Exercise of Piety and Devotion, as so many Grimaces to impose upon silly People, to draw them to give them Esteem and Respect; it's a Breeding that pretends to nothing that is serious, but fills their Heads with Tunes; and their Tongues with Talk and Laughter, and sends them Home in Antick Dresses, with Ribbons and Feathers, like a May-Pole; and

and he that came last from thence prescribes the Fashions for the Year to come, and Men flock to him as the best Master in the best Science. I am a Friend to Travel, and think it an excellent Part of Education; our Fathers travelled, and sent their Sons abroad, who returned richly improved by their Observation and Experience; nor am I an Enemy to Dancing, or other useful Exercises, which teaches the Body decent Motions, and increases and confirms the Strength thereof; we have been all bred to those Recreations, and with our Children should learn them. I am not, I assure you, a rigid Censurer of their Dress, and the Vanity of their Clothes; let them, with all my Heart, make their Taylors their Counsellors in those State-Points; there is a Levity and Vanity in Habit and Behaviour, which is very pardonable, because natural and agreeable to Youth; and it would be as ridiculous, that they should dress themselves after the Fashion we observe for Ease and Convenience, as it would for us to appear habited according to the Model of our Grandfathers Wardrobe. No, Gentlemen, I have none of this Cynical Humour, when a little Pettishness of Contradiction is over, which is hardly separable from Age so much in the Wane as ours is; but that which I lament is, That we should so much undervalue our own native Country, as before we are imbued with any worthy Knowledge of it, to run into another: That we should send our Children to learn *French*, before they understand *English*; and think they have made a happy Voyage if they return confidently versed in that, and have forgotten their own Tongue: That they should sacrifice that precious Time, in which the Love of Learning, though not a Perfection in it, an Appetite to Arts and Sciences, though not the understanding them, ought to be inculcated, and in which the Elements which contribute thereunto can most easily if not only be infused, merely to Trifles which might have Admittance in the vacant Hours of the other Attention: That they should spend three or four Years together, which can never be redeemed, only in prating and dancing, and other as unnecessary Exercises, without one serious Thought or Reflection; and are troubled with no Apprehension or Fear more, than that they may be suspected to be *Englishmen*: That any Men should affect a Habit, not as it is Clothing, but as it is a Disguise, and cover a rich and beautiful Suit, that it cannot be known what it is, with Ribbons of a hundred Colours, which cost Men more than all the rest, is such a fantastical Representation of a Man, that it is not in the Power of Charity to exclude all Prejudice towards the Head and the Heart that are so adorned and encompassed. These are the Particulars which afflict me, and which are the constant and inseparable Effects of that Breeding of which I complain; and which, believe me Gentlemen, produces unspeakable Mischiefs in the State, as well as Ruin to private Families; by the want of Reverence those Men always have towards the Government, by their Contempt of the Laws, from their extreme Ignorance in them; and (which is our proper Argument) by their Disesteem of Age, and of those who have lived much longer than they, out of the Haughtiness and Arrogance of their own Over-weening.

A. You have, *Sir*, very well observed the Pest that infects and corrupts the Nation; yet you have made a very lively Description of the very best sort of our Travellers, who have attained most by their Travel: Those Men have brought all Home with them which they were sent to fetch, the Languages, the Exercises, the Humour, the Confidence, and the Mode; if they who freighted them out, had directed them to other Traffick, they would have returned with more valuable Commodities; but the greatest Part of our travelling *Monsieurs* come Home without any of those Ornaments, but

much of the Confidence, and some of the Mode. If you knew how they spend their Time Abroad, for want of Knowledge how to spend it, you would more wonder at them who send them out, than at their Confidence when they return. I assure you, the greatest Number of those who come out of *France*, and appear at Court as if they had been *Monsieurs* from their Nurse, were not only never seen in the *French* Court, but never kept *French* Company; but sneak in the Clothes they went over into those Places which are inhabited by the meanest of their own Nation, with whom they converse, and spend their Time in those Vices which are most practised in their own Country, after they have gotten their own Oaths, and some obscene Words which they carried over with them, translated into that Language, with the Addition of others of the same Kind which are peculiar to the *French* Dialect, and which no other Nation translates into their own Language; all which they take care to pronounce with the same Exactness and Negligence as the most loosing Gamesters can affect. When the Time is expired that is dedicated to this Improvement, and they must return to those who sent them, they buy as many *French* Clothes and Coats and Periwigs as their Money and Credit can help them to, neither of which they ever wore Abroad, and appear at Court in all those Trappings, as if they had never seen *England*; and speak Half a Dozen *French* Words, if they believe there is no body in the Room that understands them; if they can sing, and have learned to pronounce Two or Three *French* Songs, they are most accomplished, and are troublesome to all Companies; nor can they go in a Coach in the Streets, without singing a Tune to the Passers by. It is not a Month since that I was standing in the Privy-Chamber, in these plain Clothes, talking with Two or Three others no better habited, when there came in one of these Gallants wrapped in a World of Ribbons, combing his Perriwig, and surveying his Knees and Feet; after he had looked about, and saw there were no others in the Room, he stalked towards us, and after Three or Four Oaths upon the Heat of the Weather, he continued to ask in *French*, whether *Monsieur* (whose Name he pronounced that no Body knew who he meant) had been lately there? I answered him in *French*, with an Invitation of Conference and Conversation; at which he startled and blushed through all his Impudence, and in a ruder Pace than he made his Entry made haste out of the Room, and departed: by which I easily discovered, how much soever he had of the Clothes and Confidence, he had none of the *French* Language. I will confess to you a Piece of my own Ill-nature, which a little Indignation provoked me to. This *Monsieur* came shortly after to the Court as well dressed as before, and was mingled in a Crowd of young Fellows, laughing and talking louder than the rest; I put my self amongst them, and discerned his Countenance in some Disorder and Confusion upon the first Sight of me; upon which I saluted him civilly in *French*, and asked some Questions concerning *France*, and what Ladies had Dominion now in that Court? he stay'd not to hear me, less to answer me, but turned himself, as not conceiving I spoke to him, and went out of the Room; and I unmercifully followed him, and found him engaged in another Company, which he presently left, and I hunted him through the Galleries, till he found a Door open through which he made his Escape; and I am resolved to pursue him, till he gives it me under his Hand that he understands no *French*. Oh, 'tis a precious Breeding for my Lady's eldest Son!

D. You have spoken my Mind so much better than I can do, that I would not add any thing to what you have said so well, were it not to tell you what Observation we make of those Men in the Country. You have

have set down what a brave Entry they make into the World, and I shall let you know how scurvily they live in it, and how shamefully they go out of it. When they have long enough shewed their Clothes, and their other Vanities in the Court and in the Town, and either upon some unlucky Quarrel ill-managed, in which they have been baffled, and so are ashamed to be seen any more in their old Company, or upon their running in Debt till they can find no more Credit, or upon their Marriage with or without their Friends Consent, they become condemned into the Country, and bring with them a Title to meddle in all those Businesses which they have been told will make them much regarded and esteemed by the People; their Names are inserted in all Commissions, and at their first coming they appear that they may be taken Notice of in the Execution; we, according to our natural Humanity visit them, bid them Welcome amongst us, invite them to our Houses, and do all we can to make ourselves familiar with them: Which they will by no means embrace our Way, but receive us with Cringes, and treat us with set Speeches, and complain how much it rains, that they cannot keep their Hair dry, or their Linnen handsome one Hour; they talk how much a better Country *France* is, and how much they eat and drink better there, which our Neighbours will not believe, and laugh at them for saying so. They by no means endure our Exercises of Hunting and Hawking, nor indeed can their tender Bodies endure those violent Motions; they have a Guitar, or some other Fiddle, which they play upon commonly an Hour or two in their Beds before they rise, and have at least one *French* Fellow to wait upon them, to shave them, and comb their Perriwig; and he is sent into the Kitchen to dress some little Dish, or to make some Sauce for Dinner, whom the Cook is hardly restrained from throwing into the Fire. In a Word, they live to and within themselves, and their nearest Neighbours do not know whether they eat and drink or no; and they often hear of some scornful Word they have let fall of the Country Diet and Conversation, for which they make a Thousand Jest upon them, which they mention aloud in all Companies; so that by degrees they hate each other heartily. It is not many Years since, that a Gentleman of this Gang and Breeding, but of a much better Nature and Disposition than most of those Men are, came to inherit a fair Fortune within four or five Miles of my House, and brought his Wife (a Noble Lady and very discreet) and all his Family to inhabit there. The great Friendship I had with his Father, and the Affection I retained for his Memory, made me resolve to do all I could to continue it to his Son; and at last, though he stood very long upon his *French* Guard, and entertained me with very troublesome Ceremony, I brought him to a very sociable Familiarity, to which his exceeding good Lady contributed very much; who, though she was of a very honourable Extraction and high Breeding, presently descended to all that kind of Civility and Courtesy, and to that Exercise of Bounty and Charity, which makes great Ladies revered and loved in the Country; but the *Monsieur* her Husband continued formal and reserved, so that very few besides my self had any Conversation with him. I dealt freely with him, and told him he ought to mingle more frankly with those of his own Rank, and to make himself more known to the People, by being present at those publick and more private Meetings for the Administration of Justice, and the Government of the Country, in which he was equally trusted by the King; and he answered me as freely, that he understood nothing that belonged to it; that I knew he had been at some of those Meetings, and was never in more

Con-

Confusion than when he was there; that he saw that all that was done there was governed by Laws and Customs, which he did in no degree understand; of which he was so much ashamed, that he resolved to be no more present upon those Occasions; and he confessed, that it was a principle Cause of his Retirement; and that he many Times commanded his Servants to deny him to be at Home, to avoid the Notice and the Invitation to such Meetings; notwithstanding all which Caution, he was so perpetually vexed with the Resort of the Country People for Justice, and other Affairs, which they knew he was qualified to determine, and which he knew himself, for want of understanding, he was not able to administer, that he resolved to get himself left out of those Commissions, or absolutely to leave the Country, that he might be free from that Trouble which he could not endure. All which he spoke with such Warmth, that a Man might swear he felt his own Defects: which is much more Ingenuity, than they of that Classis practise, who, because they are at least as ignorant as he was, revenge themselves upon the Laws, and despise what they do not understand, and make themselves merry with laughing at the Wisdom of a Justice of Peace. When I visited this Gentleman in the Morning, I always found him in his Bed, and when I came in an Afternoon he was asleep, and to most Men besides my self was denied; but was very willing to be called when I came, and always received me with Cheerfulness. Once walking with him, I told him, I doubted he was melancholy, and by spending his Time so much in his Bed, and so much alone, that there was something that troubled him; otherwise it could not be, that a Man upon whom God had poured down so many Blessings, in the Comfort of so excellent a Wife, who had brought him so many hopeful Children, and in the Possession of so ample a Fortune, should appear in the Course of his Life, and in the spending his Time, to be so little contented as he seemed to be. To which, with a Countenance a little more erected and chearful, he answered, that he thought himself the most happy Man alive in a Wife, who was all the Comfort he could have in this World; that he was at so much Ease in his Fortune, that he could not wish it greater: But he said, he would deal freely with me, and tell me, if he were melancholy, which he suspected himself of, what was the true Cause of it; That he had somewhat he knew not what to do with, his Time he knew not how to spend, which was the reason he loved his Bed so much, and slept at other Times; which, he said, he found did already do him no good in his Health. I told him, I had observed in his Closet many Books finely bound, which I presumed he might find good Divertisement in reading. To which he replied, that they were all *French* Romances, which he had read enough, and never found himself the better, for want of some kind of Learning, which was necessary even to make those Observations which might arise even out of those Books; and he confessed, that he could not read any Book half an Hour together without sleeping: All which he said, with a deep Sigh, was to be imputed to the ill Education he had had, which made him spend that Time, in which he ought to have laid up a Stock of Knowledge, which would have made his Age delectable to him, in Dancing, and such other Trifles, the Skill and Perfection wherein Men grow weary of as soon as they are grown perfect Men; and yet when it is too late to cultivate their Minds with nobler Studies, which they are unable then to enter upon, because they see what Progress much younger Men have made in those Studies before they begin, and so chuse rather to flatter themselves in their own Ignorance. O Lord, Sir, said I, I thought

you had had the choicest Breeding in the World. I remember I once asked your Father, why he had not first sent you to the University, and to the Inns of Court, before he sent you to travel? and he answered, that you were not ripe for the University, and that he meant to send you to the Inns of Court when you returned from Travel. He told me, he heard that the Universities were not so sober as they were in his Time, and doubted his Son might learn Vices there, he might not afterwards easily forget; that he had therefore put you into an Academy at *Paris*, where you would be taught the Good you would learn at Home, without taking the Ill into the Bargain. I thought he had meant such an Academy as *Oxford* or *Cambridge*, and said, that I had always heard it acknowledged by our greatest Travellers, that there are no such Academies in the World, as our Two which we have at Home; and asked him, what the Name of the College was in which he had placed you? He replied, that it was not like our Colleges, but was therefore called an Academy, because all Things are there taught; and that besides the Language and the Exercises which you were there to learn, and which you could best learn whilst you were young, you had every Day a Master who read Philosophy to you, and another Mathematicks, and another Musick, or somewhat else that you were more inclined to; so that no Hour of the Day was without its Assignment to some particular Study or Labour: And therefore I said, I wondered to hear him say, his Breeding had been amiss. After he had shaken his Head a little, Oh, said he, my Father was abused, and deceived: Trust me (Neighbour) all that is to be learned in those Academies, is, Riding, Dancing and Fencing, besides some Wickednesses they do not profess to teach; and yet are too easily learnt, and with difficulty avoided; such as I hope our Universities are not infected with. It is true, they have Men there who teach Arithmetick, which they call Philosophy, and the Art of Fortification, which they call the Mathematicks; but what Learning they had there, I might easily imagine, when he assured me, that in Three Years which he had spent in the Academy, he never saw a *Latin* Book, nor any Master that taught any thing there, who would not have taken it very ill to have been suspected to speak or understand *Latin*. O Neighbour, said he, I do promise you, that none of my Children shall have that Breeding, lest when they come to my Age they know not better how to spend their Time than I do. In a word, his Melancholy increased daily with the Agony of his own Thoughts, till he contracted those Diseases, which have lately carried him away; for this last Year he died, near Four Years before he had lived Forty Years: and if any of you know any of those fine bred Gentlemen of that Age, I presume, you neither find them the wisest Men, nor very good Company.

A. Now would I fain know, what our Alderman will say to this; he will blow away all that hath been said, and assure us, that these *Monsieurs*, who to us seem illiterate, do understand the true Mysteries of State and Government, much better than any of them who in our Judgment are learned and wise.

E. Proceed, (Gentlemen,) proceed, it is great pity to stop you in your wise Career. I hope this is not the only Exception you have, the only Cause you can find of that Degeneration you complain of in Youth, from the primitive Reverence they used to pay to Age.

B. No indeed, it is not; I will tell you another, that is so much worse, that without it, those too forward young Men could only hurt themselves, and would quickly appear ridiculous; which is, the Countenance and Approbation they generally receive; that Companionableness in which the Alderman

derman magnifies himself towards his Children; that saucy Humour, which is not meerly the Effect of the *French* Breeding, though it takes its Original from thence, yet transplanted hither, it spreads over all the Nation, and corrupts those who stay at Home, as well as such who have been Abroad, with the same Boldness and Impudence: I say, that saucy Humour would easily be reduced, if it were not supported and cherished by those in Authority, who should discountenance it, and make bold young Men know their distance, and the Reverence they owe to those who have known the World much longer, and therefore may be presumed to know it better than they. Thus a little Reprehension from them would quickly mortify them to that degree, that they would be content sometimes to hear as well as always to speak; and they would themselves blush at the Noise they make, and not think that they are the more witty, because they talk louder than any Body else. But they from whom they should receive this Castigation, like what they should disprove, and think them witty because they are bold; and call it Presentness of Mind, when they say such Things as should be said by no Man, when any Person of Reputation is present; they laugh at the wisest Men if they wear short Hair, and suspect the Understanding of all Men who do not wear their Clothes, or perform their Salutations gracefully, and do not speak as fast as they can hear; the confident *Monsieurs* speak more to the purpose when they make no Pauses in their Delivery, nor consider before nor while they are speaking one Word what they say.

A. You have touched the Sore, and discovered the Source from whence all the Mischief flows. This licentious wanton Breeding hath, like a Gangreen, wrought upon and vitiated all the Youth of the Kingdom; they who will not be at the Charge of fetching it from thence, transcribe it from them who have been Adventurers, and the Copies for the most Part are worse than the Originals, which is a wonderful Excess. My Memory doth not so much fail me, that I do not remember the Vices which were practised when we were young, and which it may be were not inferior to those which are now in Fashion: but we had not the Impudence to own the Vices which subdued us; at least, we did not publish and brag of them: we were ashamed and afraid that other Men should know what we contrived to do with all Secrecy imaginable. These Men, in their Entrance into the World, *verdunt peccandi verecundiam*, are so far from being ashamed of the worst and loosest Sins which they commit, that they take not half the Pleasure in committing, as they do in talking and publishing thereof; nay, they commit them, that they may brag that they have done so; and brag to have done much worse than in truth they have done, that they may have the Fame of being more wicked than they are. This unworthy, unmanly, unchristian Temper, we had not; we desired, when we did not deserve, to be well thought and well spoken of; and in this respect, sure our Youth is much degenerated: and it is a very monstrous thing, that it should find the Countenance and Support it doth, even in the Exercise and Practice of this Shamefulness, that Men in Authority, and who should be of Gravity, should laugh at that as a Part of Mirth and good Conversation, which they ought to chastise as a Misdemeanor and Transgression. This Indulgence, this Corruption in Superiors, and Men who should be Examples and Mirrors, by which inferior People ought to regulate and dress themselves, must in a short Time introduce a general Contagion, manifested by Contempt of all sacred Duties, and of all the Notions in Religion itself, which must bring the whole Land into Mourning. I will confess to you, how

too severe soever I am thought to be by the young Men, I am sometimes well pleased with the Confidence which I observe in some Men of this modern Education, which is more graceful and becoming than that want of Assurance and Bashfulness which accompanies our home Breeding, in what Progress soever it is extended; but then when I observe again, that this Confidence is not supported by any Degree of Modesty, but hath its Foundations upon the Ruins of Modesty, and springs out of the dead Ashes of it, I must abhor it, and call it Impudence, and an Absence of all that Ingenuity and Simplicity that can never be severed from a virtuous Mind and Disposition, and much prefer that disordered want of Boldness to such an over-grown Confidence, which is as much without Sense and Understanding, as without good Manners.

D. You have reason, and I beshrew all them who do not abhor them as much as you, and I heartily wish that they might be banished the Kingdom, with all their Fautors and Abettors; and I cannot enough wonder at those, who have lived long enough to be wiser, who look upon those exorbitant young Fellows as sent from Heaven to refine the barbarous Breeding of the last Age, and upon the present as inspired with Wit and Knowledge, that their Ancestors were never acquainted with. I have a Friend, who hath the Honour to have one of those powdered Gentlemen to his Eldest Son, whom I found one Day gabbling to his Father and Mother, and some other Women, who seemed much delighted with his Noise. After I had hearkened to the Chat a pretty while, and when there was some Period, in which they all laughed exceedingly, I took my Friend aside, and asked him, whether he understood all that his Son had said, and desired him to tell me what it was; for though it was all *English*, I knew not what he meant. He answered, that he did not perfectly understand it, but it was a Relation of some Romance he had read, which his Wife understood very well; and assured him, that there was another Mode of speaking now, than was when we were young. I could not forbear to bid him send his Wife, and her prating Son, into the Country, till they had unlearned that Mode, and till his Hair was grown out, that his Head might be kept within less Compass. I am better pleased to see a Cap of Hair, than a Cap of Fustian, with which our Grandfathers covered their Baldness which Age brought upon them; but that Men who are plentifully adorned with Hair of their own Growth, should so much affect Baldness, which hath somewhat of Shame in it, though produced by Nature and Infirmary, as to cut off and deprive themselves of what is their own, only that they may be at the Charge of a Perriwig of a better Colour, and the Hair better and handsomer planted than God and Nature chose to give them; that the buying of Hair, for the Supply of Men and Women who have store enough, should become a Trade to grow rich by; and that those Merchants should have Factors over the whole Kingdom, to purchase the Hair of Beggars, Thieves and Drabs, to adorn the empty and light Heads of Lords and Ladies, who dare not be so much out of the Fashion as to wear their own; in a word, that a Man should be laughed at for coming into the best Company with his own Head of Hair, is too negligently reproached with the Name of Folly and Wantonness, but deserves the Brand of Madness, and is a Corruption that threatens the Nation with some Punishment and severe Judgment; I have not Patience to speak of it, yet many times laugh at the Ridiculousness of it when I am by my self.

B. Come, Alderman, break this Silence; I know you are too grave a Man to be companionable with your Children in these Extravagancies, or
to

to give them leave to practise this Licentiousness ; recant, recant your Heresy.

E. O, you insult too much ; but it is possible, Gentlemen, that in the Vehemence of your Indignation, you do not discern, that, instead of reprehending the Youth, you have reproached the Aged, and have inveighed against the Fathers, when you were to have discovered the Enormities of the Children. Do any of your Sons run away from the Schools you put them to, that they may give themselves *French* Education ? You take wonderful Care to decline that good Breeding your wise Fathers gave you in the Universities and the Inns of Court, and dislike the Modesty and want of Assurance of those Places, and send them into bolder Climates to correct their Flegm ; and then you are angry that they return very confident, and not apt to be out of Countenance. You complain of the Countenance and Encouragement those forward Men receive ; from whom I pray ? Do they support their Humors and their Insolence, with the Countenance they give each other ? You confess it is from their Superiors, and those who are in Authority, to whose Age and Experience it seems they pay too much Submission and Reverence, of the Defect whereof you complain, by conforming themselves to what they approve and commend. So that instead of making any Discovery of the Folly and Iniquity of Youth, you have frankly inveighed against the Madness of the Aged ; and like Three very Cynical Gentlemen, have taken upon you to censure and reproach the whole Kingdom, for differing in their Opinion and Judgment from you ; at least, if the Indiscretion you reprehend be so general as you apprehend it to be, which I profess to you, I think it is not. I am fully of your Mind, that it is a very ridiculous Affectation in those, who send their Children to travel, before they understand the Manners or the Language of their own Country ; which does produce all those Inconveniencies and Mischiefs which you have mentioned, and it may be more ; and in truth, proceeds from their Fathers undervaluing, not more the Ways which lead to, but that sober Understanding it self which is necessary for the Service of their Country ; and their having much of their Feathers and Ribbons in their own Heads, which they desire their Sons may return adorned with. I cannot be thought an Enemy to Travel, who have lived full Twelve Years out of my own Country, and am not only the better for it in my Estate, but I hope in my Judgment and Discretion, if you will allow a poor Alderman to be capable of Judgment and Discretion ; and I have this very Year sent my Eldest Son into *France*, with Direction, that he shall visit *Italy* and *Spain*, and return again through *France*, that he may correct the ill Nature and Reservation of the one, and the Flegm and Formality of the other, with the Openness and Civility of the *French* Nation : But I must tell you, he was above Two and Twenty Years of Age when he went out, and had spent some Years very profitably in the University and the Inns of Court, and had seen most if not all the several Counties of *England* ; and it will be his own Fault if he comes not Home wiser than he went. I my self was Five and Twenty when I left *England*, and more confined to Places where my Business lay than he is to be. I know the common Objection against deferring Travel so long, and the only one, is, that they do not attain to that Exactness in the Skill and Pronunciation of Languages, who begin their Travel late ; that is, they do not pronounce it so naturally as if it were their native Language. What if they do not ? And yet this can in truth be said only of the *French* Language ; for both the *Spanish* and the *Italian* are sooner at least as soon learned by Men as by Boys, and in great Perfection. But why

Why should we affect speaking any Language with the same Exactness as our own, as if we had no mind to be suspected to be *Englishmen*? The use of all Languages is to make our selves clearly understood, and to be able so far to understand others, as to know what they mean, and what they would have. I had much to do with many Men of the Three Nations mentioned, and I never found that either of them could be too hard for me in Buying and Selling in their own Languages. If you walk upon the Exchange, and hear how the *French* and *Dutch* speak *English*, you might laugh at their Pronunciation, and yet would not be able to deceive them in any Thing you had to do with them. Language is the Key of Knowledge; and if it lets us into all that is necessary for us to know, it is a very good Key, though it be not so bright and well polished as others, which it may be inclose less Treasure. You see, I am fully of your Mind against sending Boys to Travel; not only for their Sakes, who receive little Good and much Mischief by it, but for Travel sake, for the Discredit and Disreputation it brings upon Travel: which being seasonably applied, must bring great Benefit and Advantage to their Persons and to their Country, since there are few foreign Countries, where very many good and useful Things are not to be learned, by those who are wise enough to make Observations, and to know what is fit to be transplanted into their own; and I have often thought, that if instead of these young Gentlemen who traffick on in Perriwigs and Garniture, we sent our Shepherds, our Plough-Men, and our Gardeners, as you of the Court send your Taylors, to travel, and visit other Climates, though they could not bring Home the Sun and the Soil with them, they would bring many Observations and Experiments, by which our own Country might be cultivated and accommodated, and their Expences better recompenced than those of many other Travellers, as well of Age, as under Age. I hope I have not displeased you now.

B. The Alderman hath spoken shrewdly, and if he had not told us before, that he was a Master of Arts, we should have found a Tang of the University; yet by his leave, he hath play'd the Sophister with us, and wisely passed by some Things which he could not answer, of which he may chance to hear before we part. But I long to hear what our brave Commander says, who hath pleased himself with laughing at us all, without declaring his own Opinion in the Points of which we have spoken.

C. You know, I told you long since that I would not interrupt you, nor deliver any Opinion of my own upon the Matter of your Debate, till you had gone through it, and proposed your Remedies for the Cure, as well as declared the Causes of the Malady; which Resolution I still hold; and I will tell you, that when I do come to deliver my own Opinion upon the Subject to which our Discourse was to be directed, I will wholly decline one Argument, in which all of you have enlarged very much; that is, of Education: which though it may naturally enough fall into the Argumentation in which we are now engaged, and probably is a real Cause of those Defects, and that Degeneration which is so grievous to you; yet I look upon it as so fit to be an Argument apart, and not to be mingled with any other, that whereas one of you threatned to fine the Alderman another Dinner, I shall concur with you in that Vote, and dedicate that Afternoon to another Conference in this Place upon that Subject of Education, which without doubt deserves a very deliberate Disquisition. And methinks we Five, who have so different kinds of Breeding, and all of them honest and worthy of Gentlemen, and who have lived long enough to observe the Defects in either, and in some Measure to judge what would have supplied those

Defects, should be able to compound and prescribe such an Education for Youth, as might be worthy to be embraced; which the Gaiety of one Man alone, or the Morosity of another, will never so digest as to make it be accepted, and submitted to. But for the present, if you please, proceed to your Remedies.

E. I do heartily submit to the Fine, and humbly thank my Judges, and will put you in mind before we part to appoint your Day; there being very few Arguments I more desire to hear well debated, and which sure hitherto hath never been enough provided for, or considered in any Language I am acquainted with. But to your Remedies, Gentlemen.

B. I shall willingly take upon me to make the first Entrance towards the Remedy, because I was the first who complained of the Indignity; and methinks, if we have made a right Discovery of the Causes, as no doubt we have, let the Fault be where it will, the Remedy cannot be hard to find out: As, if it hath proceeded from the ill Breeding of Youth, let Care be taken to provide, and prescribe a better Education; the Discourse whereof I am very willing to adjourn to the Time proposed by the noble Colonel, as worthy to be handled alone, and I shall be glad to live to see a good Method resolved upon for that Purpose. If the Mischief proceeds from the Countenance and Familiarity of Men in Authority towards the Dissoluteness or Over-confidence of Youth, by which those Excesses are cherished and encouraged, such Men in Authority should be roundly dealt with, and informed what Wrong they do to their Country and to themselves, since by those Condescensions they lessen their own Dignity, and People will lessen their Respect and Esteem of them; which in truth should be made, by all Mens withdrawing their Conversation from them, until those in greater Authority than they do lessen theirs, or reform the Persons. I would have no Man under Fifty preferred to any Place or Office of Authority, if there be an elder Man than he fit for that Office; for I confess, Age without Qualification and Ability, though it may deserve Respect and Reverence, hath no Title to Preferments, in which the Good and Benefit of the People is concerned, and must be provided for: After Fifty, no Man should be reproached for want of Age, because it may reasonably be presumed, that he hath then a Stock of Wisdom and Understanding capable to be improved by longer Experience. This would be a worthy Vindication of the Privileges of Age, of which the Kingdom would receive the Benefit, in the Wisdom and Gravity of those who are trusted in any Part of the Government; young Men would with Reverence observe the Actions and Opinions of their Superiors, and thereby fit themselves to succeed them; and none who have any Modesty could find Fault with this Distribution. I would fain hear any Thing objected against this Expedient.

E. We have another Privilege over Youth, which we are not so solicitous to preserve; that is, to die first, which we are all willing to decline and turn off to younger Men: but you are bound, in Justice, to prefix some Time for that, otherwise it is very unreasonable to exclude them all from Preferment till they come to Fifty, and keep it afterwards to your selves to the Age you are now of, when you are likewise as unwilling to part with it as you were the next Day after it first fell to you. If this be the best way to provide Reverence to your grey Hairs, you must not take it unkindly, if your Children join with your other Neighbours in heartily praying that you and your grey Hairs were together in your Graves, with what Sorrow soever you went thither.

A. Though

A. Though I knew the Alderman had a devilish Spirit of Contradiction, I did never think he would have disliked so reasonable a Proposition as this towards the Reformation which we all desire; sure Fifty is an Age that should have Privilege above younger Years, and younger Men should blush to be their Rivals in any Promotion; and I am confident he himself would be very angry to see a beardless young Fellow to sit by him upon the Bench to govern the City, when graver and wiser Men are set aside.

D. You have given an Instance will do us no good; Aldermen are made for their Wealth, and not for their Wit; and if he be poor, though he were the wisest Man in the Town, they will have none of him. If he swear himself that he is not rich, he is in no Danger; but if Ten honest Men will take their Oath that he is a Fool, 'twill do him no good, he shall be sure to be an Alderman; and the Beards have lost their Credit every where, so that no Judgment is to be made by that.

E. I thank you Countryman, you have helped me fairly.

A. Well, I say if that Remedy that is proposed, or somewhat like it, be not applied, by which Age itself may be preferred for the Reverence that is due to it, I shall despair of ever seeing the Kingdom happy: I say, Age for itself; for though in the Promotion to some Offices, the Parts and Faculties of the Mind are so necessary, as hath been said, that even Youth shall be prefer'd before it, if it be not well qualified; yet to those Offices which require no Parts, as ours at Court, where by long being we know what should and what should not be done, better than the most learned Men in the Kingdom and the wisest Men in the Country, Men ought to be preferred by their Standing, and their Age of being there, and young Men should not be put over their Heads to make the old Men ridiculous. If Men well considered of what Consequence the Sobriety and Gravity of the Court is to the Well-being of the Country, and the Influence the Manners of that hath upon the whole Kingdom, they would think it of more Importance than they do, that none but grave Men should have Places there; and my Opinion is, that it will never be as well as it should be, till all young Fellows be banished from thence, at least obliged to walk some Years in the outward Courts before they presume to go up the Stairs; which was the old Course when Men had Modesty or Shame.

E. Nay, Gentlemen, I know not how safe it will be to keep you Company, if you are conspiring to take away the King's Negative Voice; and when you have so little Care of his Health, as to keep Winter in the Privy-Chamber and Drawing-Rooms, and for ought I see in his very Bed-Chamber, even during the Dog-Days, and in spite of the Sun and the Summer. It is well he is not much given to Hunting, if you will allow him none but old Querrys; I hope he may have Pages under Fifty. The Lawyer must look to you, that you do not bring us all into Danger.

B. Take Courage, Alderman, I'll warrant you shall make no Forfeiture in our Company; nor is our Duty the less for the King, because we do wish that he had more grave Men, and fewer mad young Fellows, about him; and you will find that he will be quickly weary of them. It administers some Mirth to hear the same Men, of whose Boldness and Impertinence two or three Years since every body complained, now inveigh against other Men who have made themselves more gracious by their more more intolerable Impudence and Presumption. But the Alderman's Raillery, which I am very glad hath intruded itself into that Bench, hath diverted you from prosecuting the Method we were in, to find out some Remedy for that which troubles us; if mine seems not reasonable or practicable, I will be glad

glad to hear another, except you think the Disease incurable, and so despair of applying a Remedy.

D. Which I do not; yet I must tell you, that I do not think these Remedies proposed so natural, that they can ever be applied; we make more Enemies than we can resist, when we endeavour to exclude all Men under Fifty; we may remember we thought ourselves wise Men at Forty, and were at that Time thought fit by other Men for any Employment; and they who have waited long for the Estates they are to inherit after their Fathers Decease, do think as soon as they are dead they ought to be thought capable to hold any Offices or Places which their Fathers held, and we observe that Custom commonly in the Country. If we propose Remedies which are impracticable, they will vanish away with our Discourse; whereas if in Truth what we say be reasonable, it may get into other Company, and at last be received as wholesome Expedients. Methinks if we could divide the Offices, and reserve the greatest and most valuable for Men of Age, and leave the rest of less Value, and which require most Fatigue, to younger Men: and yet, it may be, some Exceptions are to be made even in those Limitations, in respect of extraordinary Abilities, or extraordinary Quality; for Encouragement ought to be given to Great Men to bring up their Children to understand as much as Gentlemen. I would be glad, since a total Exclusion seems not reasonable, that some Injunction might be given to such younger Men who are received into Offices, that for some Years they should not presume to enlarge in their Discourses, but conform themselves to the Judgment of their Ancients, till by their Observation they have learned to deliver themselves with Gravity and Discretion; it is an intolerable Thing to see young Fellows, the very first Day they come upon the Bench with us, behave themselves so imperiously, and contradict those who have governed the Country before they were born. If all this were done, I should look for a good Reformation.

B. I like Part of what is proposed, and as much dislike the rest. I am content that an entire Exception be made of all Offices in the Court, and in the Camp; he that knows best of any in this Company, says, the Offices at Court require no Parts, therefore let Young or Old have them, as the King thinks fit; who, when Young himself, must take Delight in those who are gay and vigorous; and to confine him to have none but grey Beards in his Prospect, is unnatural; and in the Camp the Colonel tells you, they like young Men very well in Council as well as Action, let him have as many as he will of them; and the Truth is, every Boy is old enough to be knocked on the Head. But I utterly disapprove your Differences and Distinctions of extraordinary Quality, and extraordinary Parts, and of greater and lesser Offices, if they are such Offices as the Justice of the Nation, and the Peace and Quietness of the People are concerned in. For your extraordinary Parts, every Man thinks he hath them, and every Man thinks his Friend hath them, when there is nothing extraordinary but Confidence; and for your extraordinary Quality, there are so many of extraordinary Quality, that if that be made a Qualification, in spite of their Age, all Offices and Places must be filled by them, as some Colleges are with Founders Kinsmen, to the Exclusion of all learned Men; when both the Extraordinaries meet in one Man, he is sure to find such a Respect from all Men, that he needs no other Encouragement. If you admit young Men to the Exercise of Offices of lesser Value, (I have told you what Offices I mean) the very being possessed of those, is a Qualification for the greater. So that there must be a total Exclusion, or an equal Admission. The Injunction

tion of Silence is unreasonable and impossible; how can you restrain a Man, who is to deliver his Opinion, from informing himself by Questions, and all other necessary Ways, and from enlarging upon the Reasons of his Opinion? And to tell him he must follow the Judgment of another, is to bid him see with another Man's Eyes: There is no Way to keep him from talking upon the Bench, but by keeping him from having a Capacity to come thither.

A. You have very ill requited me for adhering to you in all that you have said; shall Age be only without any Reverence or Privilege in the Court, which is the Glass by which the whole Kingdom dresses itself? I only intended that the Offices in Court did not require those elevated Parts of Speculation and Practice which are necessary to some other Functions of Life; not but that Gravity, Wisdom, and Experience, (all which are the Effects of Age) are most requisite for the Discharge of those Offices, and when Kings are young themselves, there is the more Reason that their Courts may be inhabited by Men of Prudence and much Observation; but since you care so little for Reformation at Court, nor are more sensible of the Contempt that Age undergoes there, it shall not trouble me, if I see Judges in *Westminster-Hall* in Ribbons and Cravats, and young Fellows with Perriwigs jostle all the old Justices from the Bench in the Country, and to give the Charge before them; I can get Quarter from the Boys as well as any of you.

C. I did not think it possible for you Three to have been severed a Hair's Breadth in any of your Conclusions; and methinks you have disoblged an old Courtier very unnecessarily, and in a Point in which his Concurrence with you might much have advanced your Design, and when your using him in this manner may disappoint you of all your Expectation.

B. No Blowing of Coals, Alderman; it is now Time for the Colonel to declare his Opinion upon all the Parts of our Discourse. I perceive it is much easier to pull down and demolish, than to agree upon the Structure that is to be raised in the Place; yet when he hath delivered his Mind, I doubt not but we Three shall still unite together in the Remedies.

A. Never, I assure you, Sir,

C. I will give you Breath, and may possibly reconcile you Three, by making you all very angry with me, and then the Alderman must shew his Justice and his Courage, or call for fresh Help to part us. You will not expect that I can be long in my Discourse, when you shall know, that I do not consent to your first Proposition, (which you think no Body can deny) that Age hath any Reason to complain of the want of Respect and Reverence from the Youth of the Time in which he lives; and then I have nothing to do to enquire into the Causes of that which is not, nor am I to spend Time in enquiry after a Remedy for a Disease that is not in Being.

A, B, and D. We shall have brave Work anon.

C. I told you I should reconcile you; and I tell you again, that I never knew, and I doubt your Experience is not better than mine, one old venerable Man, who had with his Age that Wisdom and Virtue that is the proper Object of Reverence, and was without all Veneration, and even Adoration from all the Youth, that can be paid to any thing in this World; nor indeed any Man who hath not received a full Proportion of Regard and Respect to his meer Age, tho' unadorned with any notable Quality, if he hath been without some eminent Vice or Folly; and that is as much as ever was paid, or can be due to Age. Why, Gentlemen, are not all Men sent in-

to the World to act their Parts? And if we, who are old, unjustly possess the Stage, and endeavour to keep them from entering upon it, can we reasonably complain of the Affronts we receive from them? Would you have my Regiment, which though I am old I keep young and vigorous, throw down their Arms, and ask Quarter from a Body of broken, aged, and decrepid Men, because they were Soldiers before any of the other were born? For Age is equally venerable in all Nations, and amongst Enemies as well as Friends; upon my Word, though you smile at the Instance, you will not so easily answer the Reason and Consequence of it. My Friend *Seneca*, who is my best Conversation, and indeed keeps me in my right Wits when I am ready to fall into your Lamentations, complains of the old Men of his Time, who then complained as we do, of those who were Young, that there remained in them Folly and Childishness, not only *Pueritia* but *Puerilitas*, which was so much the worse, that they had *Authoritatem Senum, Vitia Puerorum*; and he could not endure, that any Man should be thought to have lived long, because he hath many grey Hairs and many Wrinkles, *non enim diu vixit, sed diu fuit*, let him be never so Old, he hath lived very little Time; and though you were not pleased with the Alderman for quoting *Apocrypha* to you, yet since few doubt it to be the Language of *Solomon* when he was old, and had recovered himself from those Vices which dishonoured his Age, and from which the Vigour of his Youth had preserved him, I shall put you in mind of a Saying of his to our very Purpose: *For honourable Age is not that which standeth in Length of Time, nor that is measured by Number of Tears; but Wisdom is the grey Hair unto Men, and an unspotted Life is old Age*, *Wisd. iv. 8, 9.* If we do weak and wilful and wicked Things, must we be respected because we are old? Is not Pity as much as we can look for? And there is great Respect shewed us, if we are not contemned as we deserve to be. Let us be grave, and wise, and above all be sincere and religious, and I will warrant you we shall be revered enough.

B. The Sum of what the Colonel tells us, is, that the Truth is we are scurvily used, but that it is because we are scurvy Fellows, and deserve no better.

C. No, my good Counsel, I rank myself with you, as liable to all the Reproaches of Age, yet, it may be, before the Discourse is done, I may be bold with your own Particulars; that which I complain of, is the common Injustice of Age: it labours in the Consideration of what is due to it, never thinks what is due from it; would exact the utmost Penny of the one, but not pay a Farthing of the other; all Submission imaginable, no Information, no Example that may invite it. I do not flatter you or myself when I say, that it may be there will not easily be brought together Five Men of our Age (the youngest above Seventy) who (God be thanked) retain more of the Vigour of Body and Mind, for ought appears, than we do, or in whom fewer Decays are manifest; yet we must ourselves confess that we feel many; we are not so strong and active as we have been; we have not that Sharpness of Understanding, that Readiness of Conception and Expression, that Exactness of Memory, and that Temper in debating, that we had; we are irresolute, and cholerick, and froward, and hope to conceal and disguise this by Morosity, and Anger, and Incivility toward those with whom we converse. Whereas we ought to improve ourself with these unavoidable Defects with an extraordinary Civility and Condescension, which would attract that Reverence, and improve it, which cannot without Hypocrisy be paid to the substantial Parts of our Mind; we ought

to enlarge ourselves in all Acts of Kindness, and Bounty, and Conversation towards our Children, who would with the more Piety expect our Dissolution, and the more heartily lament the Loss of us. By this Means we should come to know and be acquainted with our Children, whom by an affected Morosity, Fathers commonly know less of, than of any of their Neighbours, and should make a Judgment how they will manage what we leave to them. It was a very pernicious Custom of the Age before us, which they were prescribed by their Fore-fathers, and is not enough reformed in this, that Men who had great Fortunes, and were very rich, allowed their Children, though married, and were Fathers of Children, so low and so vile a Maintenance, that they had neither the Pleasure nor Plenty of Life, except by those Shifts as were neither honourable nor delightful; and all this unthrifty Good-husbandry that they might leave them Abundance at their Death, when they could keep it no longer, and they who came to inherit it took least Content or Satisfaction in it. This made the Children murmur that their Fathers lived so long, and lost their Piety before their Fathers left them; and yet their Affections being by that Time dead, and their Minds narrowed, they chose to tread in their Fathers Steps, (whom they never revered till they were dead) and exercised the same Severity towards their Children; who likewise trod in their Steps, and impatiently longed to be rid of them, as they had done of their Fathers. And this was the goodly Reverence you magnify; when because they never durst speak before them, the Fathers concluded that they had very dutiful Thoughts towards them. There is a liberal, innocent, gay Expence, that only Youth delights in, and will make it by what Shifts soever: if they are wisely supplied by their Friends, they will do it discreetly, and be weary of it soon enough, and be in no Degree the worse for it; whereas if they are put to find the Means themselves, their Natures are often corrupted and perverted by the Arts they are forced to stoop to, and they never recover the Integrity of their Manners, and probably have contracted Vices which in a short Time waste that Estate which they were so long and so improvidently kept from enjoying a Part of; at best, if they escape those devouring Vices, they grow into Melancholy and Unsociableness, or affect a sordid Covetousness, from the View of their Plenty: so that they never have Benefit or Pleasure, because they have no Taste or Relish of the Access. Whereas a liberal Proportion assigned to them in their Youth, would have refreshed and kept their Minds enlarged, and extended them to have embraced Age with Comfort; which would have made them spend it with more Tranquillity, and preserved the Memory of their wise and bountiful Fathers even with Adoration. I am not sure (my Friends) that you are all free from this old Heresy; my honest Countryman methought spoke as if he stuck to the old Method, and meant to secure himself of his Son's Reverence by the old Prescription and Distance.

D. Nay, I know we are all (except the Alderman) a Company of Puppies, and so are all others who have the Impudence to live as long as we; and are fit to live the Remainder of our Time under the Discipline of our youngest Children. But Faith, Colonel, tell me, is there no Quarter for old Men? is Age so totally useless, fit for nothing, for no Place or Employment?

C. For very much, Sir, for the best Places, for the best Employments; that Prince shall never have his Affairs wisely or prosperously managed in Peace or in War, who hath not old Men of his Council, and in his principal Trust. Age, even when it is attended with most Infirmities, is attended

tended likewise with great Perfections, which are much the greater, if it be sensible of some Infirmities and Decays. If it cannot suggest all Things which occur to more vigorous Conceptions, it can judge better of what is suggested than the Suggesters themselves; it foresees Accidents and Inconveniencies, which the Rashness or the Warmth of younger Men keeps them from discerning; it severs what is wise and weighty out of a Heap of light, fanciful and confident Discourses, and applies it to its proper Use; and when in many respects it is not fit to execute, it is best to direct and regulate: In a Word, it ought to be at the Helm, and to steer all great Counsels and Actions, under him who is the Chief Captain, and who is at the Charge of the whole Voyage. I hope, Gentlemen, I have given you no Cause to condemn me for want of a due Regard and Reverence for Age.

A. I think you have done fairly with us; if you do not humble us down again from this Pinnacle, or disgrace us basely after so unexpected an Exaltation, I shall be well contented, and think we have got fairly off.

C. I shall do nothing like it, nor deduct one Grain from the full Weight of Dignity and Preeminence which I assigned to you as your due; but then I must tell you, though you should preside, you should not constitute the Council; you should be there, but not you only. A Prince, who advises only with old Men, will be as unhappy as he who consults only with young; I said you are good Pilots fit to sit at the Helm, but if they are not nimbler Men to trim the Rigging, to climb the Ropes, and to take a Prospect from the Top of the Mainmast for Discovery, though the Ship may be preserved from the Shelves and Rocks, it may be in great danger to miscarry in the full Sea. It is the well mingling and compounding Councils of Men of different Ages and Faculties, which makes it strong and equal for any Undertaking. In a well tempered and well governed State, that intends to make itself great, or to preserve the Greatness it hath, nothing should be more odious, nothing looked upon as more scandalous, than Idleness, the Pest and Destruction of Kingdoms; whereas Industry recovers them even when they are expiring, Industry raises the drooping Spirits of Men, purges and refines their Inclinations, makes those who are virtuously inclined more virtuous, and those who are vitiously inclined less vicious, and in the end it suppresseth and even extinguisheth Vice itself. Nothing ought to be equally cherished as Industry, nothing rendered so infamous as Idleness and Laziness; and therefore after young Men have been imbued by a good Education, they cannot be too soon disposed to Business, which will extend and strengthen their Minds, as much as the best Exercises will improve and confirm the Motion of their Limbs, and the Activity of their Body. If they spend their Time well in Business, Books and and worthy Conversation (not excluding generous Exercises and innocent Recreations and Gayeties, to which their Age is inclined) till then, at Thirty Years old they are fit for any active Trust and Employment, and before Forty for the highest Trust and the most Secret Councils, if they are not excluded by some notorious predominant Vice; and of all Vices none to be held so abominable, none to be excluded with that Severity and Irreconcilableness as Drunkenness. A Man inclined to drink, of how good Parts soever, ought never to be admitted into any Council; which he would always dishonour, and very often betray. When I would admit sober and virtuous and well-bred Men, at the Age of Forty and before, to the highest Places of Trust, and to the most Secret Councils, it is not because I think them as wise as ever they will be, or as wise as those who are older

older than they in those Offices and Councils, but because they are capable of all the Improvement the Age and Experience of others can suggest to them; they are divested of those Passions and Impetuosities which Men of hotter Blood are apt to be transported with, and are excellently prepared for the Reception and Observation of what the Experience and Wisdom of elder Men offer in their Counsels, which insinuates itself into them insensibly, that they find every Day the Benefit they receive. On the other side, they who are elder retain their decaying Parts the better, and oftentimes find them even renewed by the Strength and Assistance of the others Conversation and Counsel. A Prince, by this wise and happy Mixture, provides for an eternal Succession of Wisdom in his Council, when the Younger are informed and fortified by the Gravity of the Elder, and the Elder confirmed and supported by the Sagacity and Vivacity of the other; whilst the one, with all possible Jealousy and Reverence, watch that nothing of Rashness or Inadvertency shall fall from their younger Years, and the other, with equal Animadversion, that no Waywardness or other the natural Defects of Age be discovered in their Transactions. And as the Wisdom of Princes should make this Mixture of Ages in their Councils and other Employments, the Old and the Young should affect this Mixture in their general Conversation in the World; by which the one will get much Wisdom, and the other much Reputation and Reverence: of both which they are deprived, whilst old Men decline the Company of Young for their Ignorance and Presumption, and the other abhor the Conversation of the Ancient for their Pride, Pedantry, and Peevishness.

D. I am not unsatisfied with the Distribution the Colonel hath made, and the Respect he hath provided for wise and virtuous Age; nor do I wish that the Vices of the old Men should find any. It is pity but Looseness and Debauchery in Age (which is much more odious than in Youth) should be exposed to Contempt, or rather to Punishment; but methinks there should be some Reverence paid to Age, even for the sake of Age, with all its Defects, except it be Defects in Manners, which are unpardonable. Is there no regard to be had of us, no respect to be shewed to us, when our Wits lose somewhat of their Sharpness, when our Invention and Memory decay, and those Defects appear which are both inseparable from Nature, and incurable by Art?

C. Very much; and much the more, if the Patient be sensible of his own Disease; very much Reverence is due to innocent Age, and an Absence of all kind of Reproach to the Defects and Decays of it, which though they cannot be concealed, must not be disregarded, and the more Reverence paid to what remains in its Vigour. But this Question, that was very pertinently asked by my Countryman, gives me Occasion to enlarge, and trouble you more than I intended to do. I told you, I should advise Princes to retain wise and old Men in their Service, and especially in their Councils; but I did not tell you, that wise old Men should ambitiously covet those Employments. Princes must be obeyed and served by their Subjects, who in serving them serve their Countries; nor can they honestly, for their own private Ease or Benefit, decline those Charges when they are required to undergo them: but except they are obliged by those Commands, nothing is so unnatural as for Age to be solicitous for Offices and Employments, *Lex a quinquagesimo Anno militem non cogit, a sexagesimo Senatorem non citat*; the Law is more indulgent to us than we are to our selves, and our Ambition increases when our Strength decays. Seneca relates a pleasant Story of one, I think he calls *Turannius*, who ha-

ving been a Man of great Activity and Diligence all his Life, when he was past Ninety Years of Age, made it his humble Suit to *Cesar*, that he might be discharged from his Office; who was so gracious to grant his Request: The old Man, when he found himself dismissed, put himself into his Bed, commanded his Servants to lament him as a dead Man; in a Word, he appeared so uneasy to himself, and so miserable, that his Friends prevailed with the Emperor to remit him to his Charge again; *Nec finivit ante tristitiam, quam labor illi suus restitutus est.* I doubt my Counsel hath known too many of his Profession, who have unwillingly given over the Fatigue of Business till their Spirits have been so spent, that they have scarce had Life enough left to die. The truth is, we have too few Examples in any Profession of Men, who have wisely retired from the Noise and Drudgery of the World, whilst they could possibly stay in it.

B. Why, my good Colonel, if you knew the Pleasure a Lawyer enjoys in his Profession, you would not wonder that he parts so unwillingly with it: I assure you, it is not the Money he gets; they are not generally a covetous People, they use what they have, generously and charitably; but the Conversation and Exercise which they have enjoyed so many Years, makes it uneasy to be severed from it. Alas! we can do nothing else; take us from that, and we die.

A. What would you have an old Courtier do? We are good for nothing out of our Places, and if we have so little Respect whilst we enjoy them, we should have none if we give them over; besides, we have so little to do, that we have Leisure enough for Contemplation, and Time to exercise the best Thoughts our Understanding and Breeding can suggest to us.

D. I pray, Colonel, what Retirement would you have us Country Gentlemen make? We have no Offices to give over, but those which the King commands us to execute for his Service, and the Good of our Country; and we must look to the good Management of our Estates, that we may be the better able to provide for our Children.

E. That is, to provide that your Children may have very little out of your Estates, whilst you can enjoy them yourselves; when you are dead, they will have what you cannot carry with you, without being much beholden to you; why do you not make them Sharers with you whilst you are alive?

D. We are not so companionable as you are, good Alderman, with our Children. But Colonel, you keep your Regiment still?

C. I do so, my Friend; by which you may see the great Wealth that is raised out of our Trade, and which we make some Adventures for, that now after Seventy Years of Age I must starve if I give it over, having nothing else to subsist by; and I do acknowledge it as a great Bounty in the King, that he gives me leave to receive the Profit and Wages of it, and yet dispenses with my Service and Attendance upon it, so that as to any Labour I am free, and vacant to prepare my self for the more important Service of or toward the next World: But I assure you, Gentlemen, I had no purpose to provoke either of you; I censured my self as much as any Body, and must still lament that Restlessness in Age, which engages us in all those Pursuits which Youth are most importunate upon, without observing in them that every Advance of Age makes them decline and give over some Pleasure they delighted in: They give over Dancing, when they see younger Men dance better than they; they care not to play at Tennis as soon as they find that they are excelled by more vigorous or dextrous Players; the two contrary Affections of Pride and Modesty work the same Effect

Effect upon all other Men, to give over any Exercise or Administration, when other Men are taken Notice of to perform that Function better than they: Only old Men, who find their own Decays and Defects if they are wise sooner than other Men can, never conceal them, by withdrawing from the Stage till they are even hift off; but would still act the best Parts, when both their Voice and their Memory are decay'd. Whereas, if they would then retire from any Obligation of Fatigue or Business, those Parts, which after the first Decay are in a short time worn out in Action, will by a timely Recess remain long with their old Lustre, and keep their Age very venerable to those who shall be admitted to their Conversation; after their Words Men would not speak again, and their Speech would drop upon those who hear them; *They would wait for them as for the Rain, and open their Mouths wide as for the latter Rain*, as they did for Job, Job xxix. 23. What Monuments of Reverence would be raised to such Men? and their Memories would be celebrated to Eternity. I would not be thought to invite or to condemn Men to retire from an active and busy Life to a sullen or a melancholy Station, to be recluse in a solitary Cell, without any Pleasure of Life; what I prescribe cannot be separated from Chearfulness; Men who have been active and busy, do only know the Delight of being idle. It is to this Refreshment I invite you, to a reviving Recreation after a long and continual Labour and wasting of the Spirits, that you will a little unbend your Mind before your Heart-strings break; that you will enjoy what you have got without endeavouring to get more, which hinders you from enjoying the other. There can be nothing of equal Pleasure and Comfort, as the reflecting upon what we have done well in the Course of our Life; nor of equal Benefit, as the recollecting upon what we have done amiss: and believe it, these Reflections and Recollections are never so effectually and sincerely made, as when we are vacant from all Projects and Designs upon the World. Besides, do we think Dying to be a Work to be perfunctorily done, negligently to be prepared for? If a Great Man appoints to call upon us to make a Journey with him, or to him, we bethink our selves of carrying all Things necessary with us, that we may perform our Journey decently; and is there need of no Thought, no Preparation for that Journey, which we are sure that God will very soon call upon us to make? Do we not believe that there is a Decency in dying; in so disposing our selves that we have nothing else to do but to die? This is that which Age is not enough sensible of, that provides not to be vacant from all those Thoughts which will not suffer us to be vacant to that; and which can only make those other necessary Thoughts, by being familiar and often turned and revolved, to become pleasant to us, and make us look undaunted upon the Approach and the View of Death itself.

E, The Colonel hath given us excellent Counsel, and I hope we all think of it more than we seem to do; yet, without doubt we cannot think so much of dying as we ought to do, whilst we remain entangled with the Business of Life. They who keep the same Offices and Employments to the Hour of their Death, which have taken up their whole Time in the most vigorous Part of their Age, cannot be presumed to think more of dying than they did then; which is a great Blot upon their Wisdom and Piety. We should put off those troublesome Clothes some time before we go to Bed, before we are not able to walk under the Weight of them: And the same Reason holds in our other Estates in Land and Money, which ingross our Thoughts as much as Offices; we should resign them to those in our Life, who

who must have them after our Death, that we may see how they will become the Fortune we leave them; which, if our Children are prudent, and behave themselves as they ought to do, must surely give us the greatest innocent Pleasure and Content that we can carry with us out of this World; and of which we deprive our selves by not making the Experiment. If they appear other than we wish, we have still the Opportunity, by Advice and Authority, to do more towards their Reformation than is like to be done after our Death, upon Discovery of the same Faults. This is the only Way to be acquainted with our Children, which no severe four Parents are, and to take Pleasure in them, and that they may take Pleasure in us, and be heartily sorry when we can stay no longer with them; which kind of Sorrow is much out of Fashion.

A. Nay, if the Alderman be so willing to give over the World, there is hope that none of us will remain too much in love with it. We in the Court have leisure enough for Contemplation and Thought of Death, and we have the frequent View of many Mortifications, which work more upon us than any Observation you make upon the Bill of Mortality; besides, a pious Death in a Courtier makes (you know) a good Noise abroad, therefore if you please (Gentlemen) I will keep my Place and die there; for indeed my Genius would never be pleased with the Country or any other Retirement, nor should I die so decently any where as in the Court.

B. I will not deny but I have learned much from every one of you; and though I was over afraid that the Colonel would have thrown all old Fellows into some Dungeon, where we should be left to look to one another, I must now confess that he hath treated us very well, and made some Observations of the Infirmities and even Vices of Age, which are too true; for which he hath likewise prescribed very wholesome Remedies. I thank both him and the Alderman with all my Heart, and you shall be all Witnesses of the Effect this Conversation hath wrought upon me, for this shall be the last Term you shall ever see me at *Westminster-Hall*; and I will henceforth (God willing) at least give myself leisure for those Thoughts, which I doubt I have too long deferred, I am sure not been enough intent upon.

D. I will not be the only Man that parts without Benefit by this Conference: I do acknowledge that all the Noble Colonel said hath made a deep Impression upon me; and I do promise the Alderman that my Children shall thank him for the Good-breeding he hath given me in my old Age; they shall very soon receive the Profit of it. I remember the Colonel's Friend *Seneca*, laughing at the Unwillingness which most old Men have to die, says, *Turpe est non ire, sed ferri*; we do not walk, but are hurried to Death: which is a very indecent Pace, and can proceed from nothing but a sottish Incogitance; a greater Negligence than we are guilty of towards any Contingency of our Life; which it is high time to reform. Gentlemen, none of us can say we have lost this Afternoon.

E. I will not part so with you; you all remember that the Colonel hath adjourned a Part of that Subject which might have fallen into our present Discourse to be handled another time by itself, concerning *Education*; and I submitted chearfully to the Fine of providing another Dinner for you: the Time of that Meeting must be agreed upon; and I will desire one Liberty from you, that I may bring one Guest more, who I am sure is well known, and will be very acceptable to you, and will bear a good Part in our Discourse: It is the good Bishop whom you use to call my Friend;

Friend, who, having been very well bred himself, and seen Foreign Parts, will supply us with many necessary Animadversions and useful Reflections; he and I have sometimes conferred upon this Subject, when I have thought he hath spoken very pertinently; I will not doubt of your Approbation of his Company: And because you know all Committees fall which are left *sine die*, let me desire you to dine with me the next Day after To-morrow, that we may proceed upon this longed-for Argument.

All. Content.

B. I shall die with much the more Ease, if I shall first see a good Method proposed for the Education of our Posterity.

*A DIALOGUE between the same Persons and
a Bishop, concerning EDUCATION.*

A. **T**HE Alderman hath done his Part, we have had a very good Dinner; which hath been so much the better, in that it hath left us good Time before the Evening will oblige us to part; we are in our old Seats, and therefore let us lose none of the Time that is providently in our Power, but enter upon the Argument that was designed for this Conference.

Bp. Though I had a good Title to the Dinner by the Alderman's Invitation, I doubt I shall be an Intruder into your Conference without your Permission. I confess I come greedily to it, being informed of the Subject it is to be upon; and I have been so fully advertised of what passed the last Day between you, that I heartily wished I had had the Honour to be present, and I beg your License that I may not be absent at this.

B. My Lord, the Alderman had no Authority without our Consent, to invite you to Dinner; which was not the Effect of his Bounty, but the Satisfaction of a Mule very justly laid upon him for a Transgression, and he promised us into the Bargain, that we should have the Honour of your Lordship's Company in this Conference; which we were all glad of, knowing well that we shall have great Benefit by it: and if you please, without further Compliment, let us enter upon our Business; and since we found you, Colonel, a Man of excellent Method (how much soever you anger'd us in our last Conference) let us desire you (for I presume it will be grateful to us all) to prescribe the Method to us for our present Debate, where we shall begin, and by what Degrees we shall form our Discourse.

C. I shall obey you without Scruple or Excuse, though you must expect nothing of Art from the Method of a Soldier. I wish we were once enter'd into the Argument; and before I can make any Way, I must suppose, that being to discourse of Education, and the Rules that are fittest to be prescribed and observed in it, for that End for which it is designed, which is to dispose Men from Children to Wisdom and Virtue, whereby when they come to be Men, they may be delighted to tread in the same Paths, I must confine myself only to the Education of noble and generous Persons; I mean, to the Children of Persons of Quality, who' can be at the Charge, for good Education is chargeable, and leave the rest to those common Ways which their Fortunes as well as their Inclinations lead them unto.

D. You shall do well; for besides that the good Breeding of the greatest

and best Men provides most signally for the Publick, if there were a good Tract in View for them, they would draw some inferior People into the same for their immediate Service and Attendance, and others according to their several Degrees and Fortunes would observe such Parts, and come as near it as should be agreeable to them.

C. Nay, I shall not propose any thing so expensive in the Way itself, (there will be Circumstances of Expence that may be indulged to the Quality, which shall have no Influence upon the Rule) which may not be supported by Men of competent Fortunes; especially if they look upon the well-educating their Children as the Discharge of a Debt they owe them, and the Payment of the Portion they may justly expect to receive from them: and without doubt, the retaining it from their Breeding, that their Portion may be the greater, is very ill Husbandry, and the Cause of great Mischief in the World. I shall then begin my Rules towards their Education, from that early Part of their Life when they first begin to speak; for they are much sooner capable of receiving evil and corrupt Manners, than of understanding good Counsels; and I shall not differ with any that shall begin his Advice sooner, even from their Entrance into the World, in providing for their first Milk.

E. I thank you, Sir, with all my Heart, for giving us that Hint. Whatever your Opinion is, upon my Conscience our first good or ill Breeding begins with our first good or ill Milk; Nurses are the first Tutors, and contribute not only very much to the Health of the Body, but have an Influence upon the Mind and Spirits. I wish Mothers, who enjoy great Strength and Vigour, did not think they had done all their Business in getting their Children, without taking the Pains to nurse them; which surely seems to be some Obligation from Nature, where Health admits it; I am persuaded they would find ample Recompence in the first Growth of their Children, unimpaired by any ill Qualities of Sale-Milk, the Original of which is seldom enquired into or considered: and we see Mothers are much more tender of those Children which they nurse themselves, than of those which they billet Abroad, and there is much Good proceeds from that Tenderness.

B. The Alderman was old before he was married, and thought more of leaving his Children rich than of getting them, and so went warily to work. Men of less Good-husbandry have less Patience; and it would be a great Loss to the Commonwealth in lessening the Number of the People, if every Mother were obliged to nurse all the Children she brings forth; except you think that might be recompensed by the Number their Husbands would get in other Places whilst they are idle. You will do no Good upon this Argument, except you can prevail with my Lord-Bishop to convince the Ladies that they are bound in Conscience to perform this Office.

D. The Lawyer is very wanton at this Age. I assure you, I think the Matter worthy a more serious Consideration, and that this first Year of our Life is not of so little Moment as you seem to think it; and if we have a Soul then as well as a Body, how insensible soever it is then of the Nourishment it receives, it is probable that all Nourishment is not alike to it; and the Respite Women would have by being Nurses themselves, would make them bring stronger Children, and the Number would be made up in Time; whereas the over-much Haste carries both Mothers and Children to their untimely Graves. And though I am not sure that there is an Obligation in Conscience upon all Mothers to perform that Office; and if there were, it would be difficult for my Lord-Bishop to convince all the Ladies in that Part of their Duty; yet I am confident his Lordship does believe.

that in Prudence and Discretion they ought to think more of it than they do, at what Liberty soever they may be with Reference to Conscience.

Bp. I did not think to be engaged in any Discourse of your Nursery, in which you all know how ignorant I must be, and of all the Qualities and Restraints that must accompany a good Nurse; yet I am far from thinking this Matter to be impertinent to the Discourse you are upon, since the Colonel intends (he tells you) to take care of his Education from the Time he can speak, which is often as soon as he is nursed, and therefore there cannot be too much Caution in preparing the Subject-Matter to be fit and proper for his Impression. But methinks you lay too heavy a Weight upon the poor Mothers, in making it a Sign of their Tenderneſs, or of the Absence of their Affection, in taking or not taking upon them to nurse their own Children, which is not in their own power to do (how willing soever they are to undergo the Trouble and Inconvenience of it) if their Husbands will not permit them, without whose Consent they cannot perform it; and therefore if I thought it a Duty in them, I should not declare it, lest it might occasion a great Breach of Duty, in not submitting to the Pleasure of their Husbands. But I am very clearly of Opinion, that the Matter itself is too little and too lightly thought of; and that if for many Reasons the Child must be deprived of its first Nourishment by the Milk of the Mother, which is the most natural, it ought to be the Care of the Father and Mother that any Milk should not be thought good enough to serve the Turn; that the Nurse be at least of untainted Reputation, of unquestioned Virtue, and of a Mind as well formed as can be found; that the first Blood that is made in the Child, may not have the Corruption from the Milk, as can never be purged out, and retain some Venom in it that no Antidote can ever expel. This I doubt is not enough thought of by those Parents, who look no farther than that the Nurse they provide have Milk enough, though it be the Milk of a Bastard, and of a Mother void of all Virtue.

A. I like your Discourse well; but methinks we have been long enough at suck; and my Lord-Bishop hath said somewhat that satisfies me, that it is often better to put out Children, than to suffer them to be nursed by their own Mothers. It is observed, that Pheasants and Partridge are better Meat which are bred up by a House-Hen, than those that follow their wild Dams. You can never determine this Controversy; and if the Colonel shall keep us as long about the Cradle, I shall not expect to see a fine Gentleman bred amongst you all this Afternoon.

C. My good Friend's want of Patience shall not make me omit saying any thing that I think to the Purpose; it may be, he thinks all Discourse of Education to signify nothing till his Child be of Strength to learn to dance or ride; whereas if they are neglected till then, what they learn afterwards will do them little good. It is a general and a fatal Mistake, that we believe Children incapable of Instruction till they have such a Proportion of Reason as to understand what is good and what is ill; whereas I told you before, and I told you true, that Children are capable of learning what is bad, before they can understand the Reason why any thing is good, or why the other is bad, and yet having learned it, retain it afterwards in spite of all Reason; and therefore I shall observe the Course I first proposed, to set some Guard upon the Cradle it self; and yet I will gratify our Friend in not staying too long there, and begin my Advice from the Time the Child begins to speak. As Children frequently inherit Diseases from their Parents, which Physick administred with the greatest Skill

Skill and Care, with great Difficulty removes; so they receive Contagion from those who are first about them, when they who give it and they who receive it are equally innocent from any ill Intention. As soon as they can speak good or ill, clean or unclean Words are the same to them, and the one as easily learned as the other, and what is learned at first is very hardly untaught afterwards; so that the first Care that Parents ought to have, is, to have no Persons, of what Condition soever, come about their Children, but such amongst whom they shall never have a loose or an ill Word spoken, or see an unclean Action done, but innocent and harmless Mirth and chaste Words; and never any Tales to work upon their Imagination to terrify or affright them, which make so great Impression upon them, that the Mischief lasts very long, and is not removed even when they come to have Reason enough to be ashamed. The best Breeding Children can have, whilst they are under the Care and Oversight of Women, is Cleanliness of all Kinds in their Clothes and in their Words, that they may neither see nor hear any thing that is uncomely, for by seeing or hearing they will learn of themselves; and for want of Circumspection in this Kind, many Children are delivered out of the Hands of the Women, possessed with more real Vices than can be rooted out by any Example or Discipline in the whole Course of their Lives afterwards: And of this, I suppose your own Observations can suggest more Examples than enough, of those who still use and cannot give over many obscene and filthy Words, which they confess they learned when they were first taught to speak.

D. I assure you I know a Boy, and of no mean Birth, in whom the Father and the Mother took great Delight; and when he begun first to speak, the Father in playing with him, taught him to call his Mother all the ill Names he could think of, which the Child innocently learned and accustomed himself to, which caused Laughter too long; and before he was Six Years old, the Father and Mother by themselves, made him drunk to see his Humour; afterwards they bestowed a liberal Education upon him, not only with Reference to the Expence, but even in the Care and well-ordering it under discreet and honest Governours: but the Vices he brought with him out of the Nursery could never be wrought out of him; and amongst his other Wickednesses in which he abounded, he never recovered the least Reverence or Affection for his Father and Mother.

B. They were well requited for first not performing their Duty to him, which made him fail in his towards them; the Advice you give is very good, and especially to be observed by Persons of the best Quality, who will be thereby obliged to breed their Servants well, that they may breed their Children the better; and the good Manners of the Servants is a great Evidence both of the Manners, and the Wisdom of the Masters; and since domestick Licence hath broken in so far, that Men are not concerned in the Behaviour and Sobriety of their Servants, their Children are bred much the worse. It is a pernicious, though a common Error, to imagine that it is no matter what Children do, or whether they be taught any Thing or no, till they are Nine or Ten Years of Age, that they begin to understand what they are taught.

C. I should care the less whether they are taught or no, if they would learn nothing without Teaching; to keep them from learning what is naught, is the greater Business than to teach them any Thing that is notable. That which is fittest for them to learn at those Years, should rather be taught in playing, and such Levities as that Age is delighted with, than in any serious and elaborate Method; it is very good Learning for them to wear their
Clothes

Clothes handsomely and neatly, and therefore Variety is convenient; and to move decently and gracefully, which is all the End of Dancing, and therefore they should learn that Exercise early, that their Gate and Motion may be well formed, and their formal Civilities and Courtesies be performed with Confidence and Address. It is one of the Things which I believe many of us scarce take notice of, how few there are who make an Entry into a Room, where much Company is, with that Grace and Assurance that becomes them; especially if they find the Eyes of Men upon them, which disorders their Countenances, makes them go faster, put their Heads and Hands and Feet into Twenty Antick Motions; and if they see no body with whom they are acquainted, and who by a little Conference helps them to recover themselves, they make more haste out than they did into the Room; and so their Confusion and ill Mien becomes more notorious and ridiculous: all which proceeds from their not being taught to walk and move in the Age we speak of; for though there is another and a worse Confidence easily learned long after, yet that natural Assurance which produces that Steadiness and Comeliness of Motion which we were speaking of, is then inculcated into us, and best received and fixed in us; and all Exercises which that Age is capable of, are then to be entred upon, both as they are innocent Diversions, and as they strengthen and instruct the Limbs in their proper Functions. This is the Age that the Tongue most delights in prating, and then the Voice will be best formed to remedy any natural Imperfections, and to such a Cadence as may be grateful to the Ear; and this Discipline and Instruction of the Voice is not enough considered, though there may be a very pleasant Musick in the Voice, where the Ear is not able to distinguish of Tunes; and much of this Conformity of the Voice may be learned at this Age, though Nature hath not taught it. Then is the Time to teach them any Languages which they can learn by Rote, and without the Formality or Method of Grammar, which they cannot yet comprehend. And all this shall be taught and learned in Play and Sport, without restraining them from any of those Childishnesses which are natural to their Age; for I do no more desire to see an over-serious and grave Child, than I do a light childish old Man; and if those natural childish Humours be suppressed and stifled by sour and severe Discipline, they will break out in a Time when they will be more ashamed of them, and when they will not be so innocent. But here I must again put you in mind, that honest and discreet Servants be about them, to attend them in all their Sports and Pastimes, that they may not there learn ill Words or ill Fashions, but be taught to abhor them as soon as they see or hear them; and such as use either should be removed from their Company, with the same Diligence as you send a diseased Man from them. This is the Time when their Minds, and even their Nature is to be formed, though their Capacities are not to be much enlarged. Now they are to be taught Gentleness, and Courtesy, and Affability towards all Men; and all the Seeds of Pride, which will sprout up quickly, must be strictly watched, and all its Product extirpated, as the Mother of all that Ignorance and Folly which usually disfigures the Lines of great Men; and the greater their Quality is, with the more Care this Weed is to be pulled up, for no Prince ever lost any Thing, or run into any Inconveniency, by Excess of Courtesy and Affability; and if Pride be then suffered to grow, it will never after be rooted up. So that you see all the Breeding I assign to them, till they come to the Age you mention, of Nine or Ten Years, is but Negative; that they be not corrupted by ill Examples and Customs, and their Manners carefully

fully looked to; and be taught only such Things as their Age and Humour is naturally delighted with, without imposing stricter Rules upon them than they can easily comply with: And I hope I have not stay'd longer about the Cradle, than was necessary for the Provision we have made.

A. I am not weary of hearing you, and believe you have discoursed very reasonably, and provided very well for your Child; yet I must tell you many will believe that you indulge too much, to leave them totally without any Book-learning, till they are Ten Years of Age. I assure you, I have known Boys of that Age, who understood both *Latin* and *Greek* very well.

E. Did they understand proportionably afterwards, when they came to be Twenty? I make no doubt but Children are capable of understanding one Language as soon as another, and *Latin* and *Greek* as soon as *French*; and it may be with much Industry they may be taught the Grammar too, and to read any Book; but what are they the better for it? Those early Blossoms seldom produce seasonable Fruit. As the Limbs of the Body find their Strength and Agility by degrees, which may by Application be as well retarded as advanced, and no Body prescribes Crusts or hard Meat to the Teeth of the first Growth; so the Mind hath its ply too, and nothing should be administred to the Exercise of it that is too knotty and uneasy. I have seldom known a Child of extraordinary Learning, who was a Scholar when he was a Man; the Profit is not worth the Pains.

C. I did not restrain Children from learning as much as they have a mind to; nor am I an Enemy to those Forwardnesses. I only did not prescribe it, nor mentioned so much as Reading, though I did not suppose they would live to that Age without being able to read; but proposing all that they learn to be in a Way of Play, and complying with their childish Humours, I must suppose, that by their Overseers (who must use great Strictness and Discipline to restrain them from all that is naught) they will be induced to play so much likewise with Books, that they shall not be totally ignorant what a Book is, nor be without some kind of Appetite to learn: But I did, and do think three or four Years to be enough for the obtaining as much School Learning as is requisite, from the Time that they enter seriously upon it; and that is the Reason I assign so long a Time before I oblige them to be so serious as an exact Comprehension of Grammar requires. And that they may make this Progress with the most Advantage, I must rather commend the Education in publick Schools and Communities, than under Governours and Preceptors in the private Families of their Parents, where are only one or two or more of the Children of that Family, and where the Vices of all the Servants are every Day exposed to them, with too much of their Company, which no Care in those Places can prevent. There is so much Benefit arising from the mutual Conversation of many Children together, of different Ages and different Parts, and the Imitation and Emulation that arises from thence, that we seldom see a Boy continue long of a childish Understanding in those Companies: But then I do not tell you, that I think any of our publick Schools sufficiently instituted to yield all those Advantages to the Education I wish; they are in truth excellently instituted to those Ends for which they were erected, which were charitably to bring up the Children of the poorer Rank of Men in the Knowledge of Letters, that they may be fit for such a Condition of Life as their Friends shall apply them to; nor are they in any degree inferior to the so celebrated Schools of the *Jesuits*, which are more taken Notice of by the Multitudes which resort to them, all the Boys of a great City repairing to one School of the *Jesuits*, where many

many Masters teach them according to their Capacity, rather than for the Eminence of any of the Scholars; and I have reason, from the Observation I have made, to be confident that many of our publick Grammar Schools have more extraordinary Scholars in them than any Schools of the *Jesuits*, which contain more than treble their Number; and I know the Sons of many Persons of Quality and Honour receive in these Schools the first Elements of Learning with good Success, and it is pity that more of them are not sent thither, till better Places are provided for their Breeding. But I have told you, Education is chargeable, and those Institutions cannot supply all that is necessary to it. There are three Errors in all our publick Schools, which are called *Grammar Schools*; the two first very hard to be remedied; they spend too many Hours together at their Book, and they have too many Hours vacant from their Book, which is wholly left to themselves, and which they seldom spend innocently, except they are under some discreet Oversight; but the third, which may be a principal Cause of the last of the other, is their staying too long in those Schools, even to the Age and Growth of Men, that they may enjoy the full Benefit and Emolument which their Founders intended, and to which others by Favour are preferred before them. The Mischief which proceeds from hence is very great, and makes them carry all the Vices from School, which they could hardly learn so exactly in other Places, at least they would not do it quickly; therefore I would have that Authority, which is necessary towards such a Reformation, to establish such indispensable Rules and Edicts, that no Boy should remain in any publick School after he is past Sixteen Years of Age: I say with some positiveness, that he may by that Time attain to as much good Learning of the School, as makes him very capable to improve it in the Universities; and what he gains after that Age in those Places, will not weigh down the Vices he gets into the Bargain. After that time let him quit the School, and betake himself to that Course of Life his Genius is for. I do assure you, I have many times had great Boys, for so they ought to be called whilst they are at School, come immediately from thence into my Regiment; who, the first Day, have performed all the Offices of good Soldiers, which require the Strength and Activity of Body, or the greatest Fatigue.

Bp. I wish with all my Heart that your Advice may be followed in this Particular, and it would produce a Reformation worthy the Sovereign's Power interposing: Some petty Damages might ensue to particular Persons in the present, which yet may be provided for, but the general Benefit towards Learning and Good Manners can hardly be express'd; and if you could procure such an Establishment to be made, you would be the greatest Benefactor to the Universities they have hitherto had; for those overgrown Boys you have mentioned, are the true Fountains from whence all those Reproaches of Dissoluteness and Debauchery flow, which dishonour those excellent Seminaries; when those Vices are thought to grow and to be cherished there, which in truth those massy Fellows who have staid so long in those publick Schools bring with them thither, and propagate with an Industry not quickly discovered, and with great Difficulty resisted; especially when those inexcusable Licences are accompanied (as frequently they are) with very excellent Parts, which for the most part wither away in their Excesses, or lose all their Lustre by the Corruption of their Manners.

B. I do fully concur with your Lordship; though I must confess that the Error is founded in Antiquity, and introduced or countenanced by the
Disci.

Discipline of our Forefathers. But methought the Colonel was very subtle in his Discovery of his two other Faults; the one that they were kept too much to their Books, and the other that they had too much Liberty to play. I suppose he will make that seeming Contradiction more intelligible, when he erects his publick School; for since he finds those we have, not fit to breed Persons of Honour and Quality, he is bound to advise how we may have better.

C. I would be very glad my good Counsellor could as easily endow my new School, as I can prescribe the Method of its Government; it may be, if that Endowment were added to some of those Schools we have already, much of what is wanting would be supplied: But methinks it is not unreasonable to propose a more liberal Education for Persons of that Quality, who are willing to be at the Charge of it, and whose Children should always enjoy a more liberal Conversation, than they who propose to get all their Fortune by their Study and Industry; and yet the Education I propose shall not put them out of the way to any honest Fortune they set their Hearts upon. I said, in those publick Schools Boys are kept too long together at their Books, and yet have too much Time to play; that is, to spend their Time according to their Inclination; which very Inclinations proceed from the License. It is too long to be intent upon their Books, four or five Hours in the Morning, and as long in the Afternoon, without any Intermission, which is the Custom of those Places; for I do not call the Change of the Book, from one Language to another, or from Prose to Verse, any Intermission, as long as the Mind is kept equally bent in all: It is the relaxing and unbending of that should be frequently indulged, and refreshed with Succession of Exercises and Recreation. Two Hours are at least enough for any Information, or Instruction, and Comprehension of any Thing that is to be given at one Time; and even Part of that may be spent in jocular Contentions upon the subject Matter, and asking of Questions in the Presence and Hearing of the Master, without any Penalty for Ignorance or Unskillfulness; when they who have the best Parts will triumph, and they who have weaker attain more Understanding in half an Hour, than their dull plodding would work out in half a Day. And by this they would at once learn a Propriety and Assurance of Speaking, which will be best improved by the Custom of Acting ingenious and chaste Plays, whether Comedies or Tragedies, in the Seasons which are applied to Recreations; riding, dancing, bowling, or any other the most childish Exercises which they take delight in, should be permitted interchangeably between and after the Seasons assigned to their Book. It would be worthy the Bounty and Magnificence of a Royal Founder, to erect a Structure fit for this noble Purpose; which would not require a great Expence beside the Structure itself and the Inclosure, that ought to be very large, and to contain Room enough for their Play, Recreations, and Exercise, with convenient Reception for those who teach those Exercises; who ought all to be subject to the Governour and Master of the School: nor should the Scholars ever go out of that Inclosure, except when their Parents require them, or when the Master himself, or some intrusted by him, accompany them to publick Spectacles, and returns with them. I would not have the Number of the Scholars exceed Thirty, for the Government whereof one Master will be sufficient, with the Assistance that each Classis will give him, in examining and instructing their Inferiors; which will exceedingly improve both. The School-Master shall be a Man well bred, and either a Foreigner, as a *French-man*, or *German*, or one who hath been Abroad, and well acquainted

acquainted with the *French* Language, and of unquestionable Integrity in Religion, and if it be possible, one who was himself bred in a known eminent School, and who hath been somewhat practised in that Charge. He shall not be in Holy Orders, that he may not be diverted from his proper Work, and be wholly intent upon the Learning of Grammarians; he should be married, since a Wife will be necessary for the good Order and Provision of such a Family, for all the Scholars shall be boarded and entertained in all Respects but their Clothing, by the Master of the School; and though all the Scholars are past the Government of Women, many of them (for after the Age of Nine Years, I am willing that they should be admitted here) will stand in need of the Care and Over-sight of Women. I would have those who teach the Exercises to be *Frenchmen*, both that they may be accustomed to that Language, and retain what they are supposed to have learned before, and because they do teach all Exercises best. And because I have mentioned Riding, which may seem too early an Exercise for that Age, for I look not to find them here after they are past Fourteen; I must declare, that I intend not Horses of Manage; which may be too rude an Exercise, though younger Men are frequently and seasonably enough accustomed to it; but lets Horses of Spirit, with which they will be much delighted as with any Play, and may be taught a secure and decent Seat, Motion, and Posture, which is in truth the greatest End of Horsemanship, and the rest will be more easily learned hereafter, if they shall see it. When all these Preparations are made towards the best Education, I think every Person of Honour and great Estate should not think it too much to allow one Hundred Pounds by the Year, for the Lodging, Diet, Schooling, and Exercise of his Son; and such an Assignment, if the Number of the Scholars be Thirty, will be distributed into such Proportions, that a liberal Maintenance will be allotted to all who shall have Parts towards this Education; that Persons of notable Parts and Sufficiency shall fill all the Places, and yet be willing to be subject to the Chief Governour of the School, who must have the Power of all. And I am perswaded, that if one such School was erected, the Benefit would be found so great, that there would be a general Combination amongst Persons of Quality to raise more of the like both in City and Country, that Persons of Birth, and who are to inherit great Fortunes, may be bred in Community with Persons of the same Rank, and above the Condition of common People, with such Alterations as the Experience and Observation of the former shall make counselable. And all Occasions must be taken by the several Masters in all the Studies and Qualities, to infuse into them right Notions of those Virtues and Decencies which they can comprehend, as of Behaviour and Courtesy, and to watch that they do not accustom themselves to Oaths, or any other unseemly Words, especially such as are prophane or obscene, and as much as is possible that they hear no such; and if they are instructed by this Method in all these good Qualities and Qualifications, and the Integrity of their Manners preserved till they are Fourteen Years old, they may, with great Assurance of proportionable Improvement, be sent to the Universities; (for I do believe the Drinking of those Waters to be even necessary to the Health of their Education.) How they shall spend their Time there, and how long they are to stay there, I leave to you to determine.

D. Truly I think he who hath bred them so discreetly till they are fit to go to the University, is best able to advise how and how long they should spend their Time there; and therefore I should press the Colonel to continue the Discourse, for we all know he understands the University

Learning well; but I would fain have it first considered, whether the University be the next Stage towards the best Education. I do confess, I do not doubt it my self, and therefore I have observed that Course my self in the Breeding my own Children; but I am often told, that I am too much an *English-man*, and I find so universal a Consent, amongst the Great Men especially, to decline sending their Sons thither, that I do suspect there may be more Reason for it than I yet comprehend; they have many Exceptions against the Universities, of which I believe our Friend of the Court can better inform us, who hears them every Day.

A. I confess, I hear enough of it; and it is strange you will not take your Rules from the Court for the best way of Breeding. We say, your Universities are Places of Debauchery, Schools to learn to drink in, which is the Poison of good Education; that if by the Care of those who are trusted to over-look them, or by the Temperance and Virtue of their own Constitution, they are preserved from those Excesses, the Learning they get there is impertinent, being only a pedantick way of Disputing and Wrangling, which makes them ungrateful to all well-bred Company; and that their Manners are so rude when they come from thence, that a Man would think by their Behaviour that they had never been amongst Gentlemen; at best, that they are so out of Countenance and blush when they come into the Company of Ladies, that they are even ridiculous: Therefore we say that the Time you would assign to the Universities, is bestowed in Travelling in the learning the Languages, the Exercises, the Assurance of Behaviour, and that they may likewise learn all that Learning there, which is more useful and commendable in the Universities. *Paris* is the most famous University of *Europe*, and the most stocked with learned Men; so that there is no reason to imagine, that they will return more ignorant from thence than from one of our own; in a Word, we see that young Men after Two or Three Years spent there, return so accomplished, that though they are not above Eighteen or Nineteen Years of Age, they mingle gracefully in all Companies of Lords and Ladies, talk more confidently of every Argument, and appear more compleat Men, than they who are Seven Years older, and never were out of *England*.

E. I pray, how do they appear when they are Seven Years older, when the Gaiety that is natural to the Age of Seventeen or Eighteen Years is over? They return indeed at that Age from Travel, with a wonderful Confidence, which may very well be called Impudence; that they are not out of Countenance at any Thing that they say or hear; all their Learning is in wearing their Clothes well; they have very much without their Heads, very little within; and they are very much more solicitous that their Periwigs fit handsomely, than to speak discreetly; they laugh at what they do not understand, which understanding so little, makes their Laughter very immoderate. When they have been at Home Two or Three Years, which they spend in the Vanities which they brought over with them, fresh Travellers arrive with newer Fashions, and the same Confidence, and are looked upon as the finer Gentlemen, and wear their Ribbons more gracefully at which the others are angry, quit the Stage, and would fain get into wiser Company; when they every Day find Defects in themselves, which they owe to the ill spending that Time when they thought only of being fine Gentlemen; they think they should fail in their Duty to their Fathers, when they send them Abroad, that they may not know the Universities, if they should hearken to any University Learning there. There is indeed a famous University at *Paris*, that abounds in learned Men, though

by our Courtier's Favour, both in the one and the other respect, much inferior to those we have at Home, which themselves cannot deny; but I assure you, none of our Travellers ever saw it, or know in what Part of *Paris* it is situated. For the great Abilities they bring Home with them, you may remember what our Country Friend told us the other Day, of a Neighbour of his, who came to inherit a fair Estate near him, after such a kind of Breeding. I make no doubt but the Colonel will assign some Time for Travel, before he hath finished his Education; but he hath done very well to refer it till after some Time spent in the Universities, which were Places of great Sobriety in my Time, and I believe are so still; nor do I think the worse of them, because the Breeding does not suit with the Ladies Humours, who, if they do not find Men ridiculous, will be sure to make those so who keep them Company most.

B. How unjustly soever, that Imputation of Debauchery is very industriously cast upon our Universities; and I do heartily wish, that some Care were taken to vindicate them from that Aspersion. I know well from whence much of the Calumny proceeds: Too many of our Great Men are without that Affection and Zeal for the Government of the Church that they ought to have; and having no desire that their Children should be better instructed than they had been themselves, must pick some Quarrel with our Universities, that they may have an Excuse for sending their Sons to those Places Abroad, where they suck in all manner of Poison against the Civil as well as against the Ecclesiastical Government: which produces more Mischief in the State than is imagined, and is in truth as prejudicial to the Interest of the Nobility, if they well considered their own Interest, as it is to the Regal, since in all the Places where those Seminaries are, the Government is meerly Popular, and the Nobility is there rooted out. And it may be, those lubberly Fellows, who come from great Schools after they are Nineteen or Twenty Years of Age, and bring their Debauchery with them, may contribute much to that Scandal: which is the more probable, because I hear those Colleges are most subject to those Reproaches, which are most stocked by those of that Size, who are sent from the most publick and eminent Schools; yet, I say, I would be glad to be informed, and my Lord Bishop can inform us, whether there be any Cause for that Imputation upon the Universities for Licence, and particularly, whether the odious Vice of Drinking be so much practised and permitted there.

Bp. I shall tell you very willingly what I hear, and what I think; and though it be many Years since I have lived there, yet the Scandal that is raised, and as my Neighbour said industriously and maliciously cast upon those Places, hath made me very solicitous of enquiring of the Truth of it: for I cannot but confess to you that the Vice of Drinking is so much propagated throughout the Kingdom, that I am not without Apprehension, that that Vice alone (though God knows we will not suffer it to be alone) will bring some Judgment upon the Nation; I am sure it exceedingly corrupts the Natures, and depraves the Understanding and Judgment of all who use it; and therefore if it takes its Rise in the Universities, or receive any Countenance or Permission there, I cannot blame those who chuse to send their Children to the *Indies*, or to the *Mare mortuum*, rather than to those noisome Fountains: But, God be thanked, the greatest Drinkers I hear of in all Places (for they are to be found in all Places) are such who never sucked the Breasts of either University, and so cannot draw the Pedigree of their Vices from thence; yet it is not easy to believe, that those Places are of so pure and delicate an Air, that no venomous Creature can live

live in it; that it hath the Quality of St. *Ursula's* Grave, where if any unclean Carcase be buried, the Earth, they say, throws it up again; where there are so many Thousand young People brought together in the Vigour of their Youth, of so different Educations, Inclinations, and Constitutions, they are not all like to be possessed with the strictest Sobriety, and to make War upon all Vice: But I have great reason to believe, and to be confident, that the Universities were never less tainted with those Corruptions from the Time they were first instituted; that there was never so much Care taken, or Diligence used, to propagate Learning and good Manners, and to suppress and discountenance all kind of Vice, and particularly that of Drinking, which exposes them to Shame and Contempt; and where that is prosecuted, that Weed will never prosper. My Neighbour touched upon the chief Rise of that Calumny, the Excuse Men must make for sending their Children to worse Places, when they should send them thither. I am very well pleased with the Reproach my Friend of the Court, who I know is of another Judgment himself, tells us is put upon the University Learning, that it is impertinent, and teaches Men to dispute and wrangle; I suppose, they do not love Logick, nor *Latin*; and in truth, I have known very few who decline the Universities, well instructed in either, of both which there is so much use in the serious Part of human Life; and therefore I do heartily thank the Colonel, for having so well instructed his Youth, till they may be fit for the Universities, and insisting so positively that they may then be sent thither: of which, if they are deprived, they and their Friends will have great Cause to repent it throughout the whole Course of their Lives; and therefore I do earnestly desire him, that he will take the Pains to dispose his Pupils to the well-spending their Time there; but that when he thinks they have been there long enough, that he will carry them likewise to the next Stage, and by the way, it may be, he will find such Defects in the Universities themselves, as may be remedied or supplied, to make them contribute to all the manly Parts of Education, as well as to Letters. And yet after all the good Opinion I profess to have of the Universities, and of the Governors and Government thereof, I do heartily wish, and know many of my Mind, that the Sovereign Power would grant a Royal Commission to some eminent Persons of the greatest Quality, and of known Gravity and Virtue, for the Visitation of the Universities, and Inspection into the Manners thereof, and of the Discipline of the several Colleges and Halls; which (how innocent soever they may appear) must produce wonderful Benefit: for, besides the Impression that so gracious a Jealousy in the King for their Welfare must make upon all Men of Ingenuity, and produce a proportionable Awe in them of being found obnoxious; so new and better Provisions and Penalties may be made and inflicted for the Discovery and Punishment of those Excesses, than the Statutes have yet provided for, and many good new Statutes made by his Majesty's Authority for the Advancement of Learning.

C. I do heartily concur with you, my Lord; and I thank you for that Liberty you give me, of which I shall make Use anon: But let me first tell you, that though it be very long since I lived in the University, (for however it be not for the Honour of *Oxford*, I must confess, I stayed there till after I was a Graduate) I have since that Time spent some Time, and been conversant in most of the Universities of *Europe*, which hath not lessened the Esteem and Reverence I have for our own; and trust me, they who send their Children for Learning or Manners to any foreign Universities,

Universities, are not worthy of the Benefits they may enjoy in their own Country. I have no purpose to dishonour any Place where Learning is professed and encouraged; yet I cannot chuse but say, that there is not only none in our Neighbour Countrys worthy to be named with our own, but that there is more Debauchery, and Corruption of Manners, in those Quarters which are assigned to the Universities, than in any other Parts of the Provinces; as they well know who have conversed at *Leyden* in *Holland*, or in *Bordeaux*, *Poitiers*, *Montpelier*, *Valence*, in *France*, or *Padua* or *Bologna* in *Italy*; where, how civil soever all the other People are, the Scholars are rude and dissolute to a Proverb: Whereas ours, I am sure, were under excellent Discipline; and we are assured by my Lord Bishop, they are at least as well governed as ever. I would fain know, where young Men can spend that Part of their Age which we assign to the University, so advantageously, so innocently, as there. It is a Time in which they should not be idle, and yet are not capable of arriving at any great Things: To dedicate all that precious Season only to Dancing, and other Exercises, how commendable soever, as they all do who are then sent to Travel, is horribly to mispend it. Much of that Time may be spent with Books, and enough left for the rest. I know you will say, that is provided for Abroad too; they have their Hours assigned to Masters in several Sciences, who read such Books to them as are proper to the Subject. But that was fully answered in our last Conference; and I assure you all that Discourse signifies nothing; there was never yet a Scholar came out of the Hands of those Masters: it must be a serious orderly Course of Study, and Intent too, (for the Time that it is intended) which can introduce any kind of Learning. And now I shall take the Liberty, which my Lord Bishop gave me, to say, that I doubt our Universities are defective in providing for those Exercises and Recreations, which are necessary even to nourish and cherish their Studies, at least towards that accomplished Education which Persons of Quality are designed to; and it may be the want of those Ornaments there may prevail with many to send their Sons Abroad, who since they cannot attain the lighter with the serious Breeding, chuse the Former that makes a present Shew, leaving the Latter to be wrought out at Leisure; whereas they would much rather desire both, if equal Provision were made for both. I look to be told, that there are such Provisions made; that there are Schools for Dancing, and other Exercises, in both our Universities. It may be so; yet I am informed, that they are rather permitted and suffered, than countenanced; which must have Masters accordingly mean Fellows, who are fitter to learn than to teach. I would have all those Places looked upon as Parts of the University, and visited and countenanced by the Magistrates thereof, and none licenced to keep a School but such who are eminent in the Faculty which they pretend to teach. Since those Places Abroad obtain the Name and Reputation of Academies, by their instructing Youth in the Exercises of Riding, Dancing, and Fencing; let it be a Part of the Ornament of our learned Academies, to teach those Qualities at those Hours when more serious Exercises should be intermitted; for I would not have it in the Power and Choice of the young Men, to spend their Time where they have most mind, in their Studies or in their Exercise; the Latter of which would probably be too much preferred; but particular Hours assigned to each, and the Restraint from the Exercises to be the Penalty for too much Negligence in the other. Now the providing for all this in that Order that is necessary, requires a new Founder in the University, to erect a handsome Structure for these Schools, with decent Lodgings for the several

Masters: for I would have all live and teach under one Pile, though in several Rooms, that they may be the more easily visited by the Magistrates of the University, to whom all the several Masters are to be subject. There must be a Stable erected, with an open and a covered Place to ride in; a Stock to provide half a Dozen good Horses to begin with, which shall be afterwards provided and supported by the Master; and some yearly Pension to the several Masters, which, with what the Scholars shall pay for being taught, may amount to a proper Maintenance: the Rates which they shall pay being appointed according to their several Qualities; it being reasonable that Noblemen, for whose sakes this Place is to be erected, should pay more than others, and so proportionably for others according to their Ranks and Abilities. This can never be compassed by the Universities themselves, but is worthy to proceed from the Royal Bounty of the King, who would receive some Recompence in the good Education of his Subjects, those of the greatest Quality being hereby invited to spend some Time in the Universities, by which they would be much better prepared to serve him, and their Country. And now a word to their Studies: Since they have brought with them a good Degree of understanding the *Latin* Tongue, I wish they may, as soon as they come to the University, be instructed diligently in the Art of Logick, and engaged in the Forms of Disputation, and all other Exercises of the College in which they are; in which there ought to be no Difference or Respect to Quality: which hath used to be an unhappy Privilege, which Noblemen have had, that they might chuse whether they would be obliged to the Publick Scholastick Exercises of the House, which is a dishonourable Prerogative to be more ignorant then meaner Men: but I am glad to hear that those abominable Exemptions are abolished, and that all Men, of what Quality soever, are obliged at least to be present at all Disputations, and they will be ashamed to be long present without acting a Part in them. And tho' I perceive this disputing Faculty is out of Credit in the Court, it is a most precious Ingredient into Wisdom, and to the more serious Part of our Life: The Art of Logick, which none of our Travellers return with, who carried it not out with them, disposes us to judge aright in any Thing; and though we do not make our Conversation in Syllogisms, and discourse in Mood and Figure, yet our Conversation and our Discourse is much the more reasonable, and the better formed, by the Experience we have had in that Art, and in which we may have spent some Time very merrily. And I must say again, this most useful Art was never well taught or learned but in the Universities: Not that a Man may not know how to make a Syllogism without going thither; but the Art it self, which is insensibly insinuated by the Custom and Observation of formal Disputations, is never attained but there, and is rarely unattained there by any who spend their Time there with any Application; I mean, so much of it as enables them to discourse reasonably, and judge of the Discourses of other Men. And I must appeal to you, whether you do not observe a wonderful Defect of Logick in the disjointed and incoherent Conversation of those who have not been instructed in it, at least who have not in their own Nature and Regularity of Discourse some Notions of it; which I confess some serious and thinking Men are affected with, yet not so clearly. Where can there be such a Conversation between Persons of the same Age and same Faculties, where they observe by those who are a little older, how much every Year contributes to the Improvement of their Parts with a little Industry, and how want of it casts them behind? And how can there chuse but be a noble Emulation amongst such Persons

Persons to make themselves eminent, whilst they, who have the Charge over them, comply with and assist their several Ambitions? I confess, I wish two Things a little more countenanced and enjoined, than I doubt they are in our Universities; which are, the Custom of speaking *Latin* in Conversation, and at Meals, as well as in the Schools, and in scholastick Exercises; and the publick Acting of Comedies and other Interludes in *English* as well as in *Latin*: which, as I have said before, is the best and most natural way to introduce an Assurance and Confidence of Speaking with that Leisure and Tone of Pronunciation that is decent and graceful, and in which so few Men are excellent for want of Information and Care when they are young. If by the Advice of their Governours and Tutors, their Time be well distributed between their Study and their bodily Exercises, and their Conversation be designed with ingenious and chearful Persons a little superior to themselves in Age and Parts, (for they should not be over-cloyed with the Company of grave and serious Men, except in the Hours dedicated to their Book) they may very well in Three Years attain to such a measure of University-Learning, and make such an Entrance into the Reading of History, or any other Science their Genius shall dispose them to, as shall raise an Appetite in them to prosecute it in any Condition of Life they can betake themselves to; and they will find such a Refreshment from Books, that will give a Relish to any Employment, and make both their Business and their Pleasures more delightful to them. So that after the Age of Seventeen, I would deliver them into the Inns of Court; where if they spend Two or Three Years as they ought to do, their Fathers have done their Parts, and they will be fit to chuse the next Stage of Breeding for themselves, as shall be most suitable to their Inclinations and their Fortunes.

A. I confess, my Expectation is fallen very low from the Height I had raised it to. Shall all our Education end in breeding our Nobility and Gentry of the Kingdom to be Lawyers; for that is the best we can hope for by sending them to the Inns of Court? Methinks all your Education is after one Standard; no Difference between Elder and Younger Brothers, between the Heirs to great Fortunes, and those who must make their own. I gave my Consent to the sending them to the University, because I think indeed they are then too young to Travel to any purpose; but I expected when you brought them from thence, that you would have carried them to Travel, or brought them to Court: for sure you cannot but think that the Court is the Place where Men may learn the best Manners, and make those Observations by which they may best steer their Fortunes. I would not have been surpris'd, if out of your Affection to your old Trade, you had sent them into some active War, which is far from being an ill Breeding; but the sending them to the Inns of Court, I never looked for from you. We shall have a very knowing Nobility to be employed by the King in Embassies to Neighbour-Princes, and in Attendance about his own Person, when one of their prime Qualifications must be, that they have carefully and diligently read my Lord Coke upon *Littleton*.

E. Indeed I think we should first have well considered and debated, if we had foreseen this Exception and Jealousy in the Behalf of the Elder Brothers, whether it be fit to breed Great Men and Elder Brothers, who are to inherit great Fortunes, that they may grow to be wise and discreet Men, and to rob the Younger Brothers of so much of their Portions, which should of Right only belong to them. If that were out of Question, we could never think that there should be less Care taken, or different Pre-
cepts

cepts given, towards the one and the other. If all the Great Men of the Kingdom were as good Lawyers as my Lord *Coke* was, they would not serve the King or their Country the worse. But pray let not that Jest make us think the worse of a Breeding, that sure contributes as much to the making wise Men, as any different Education that can be assigned. The Colonel himself, I know, spent some Years there, yet never was a Lawyer; nor does he wish, that those he would now carry thither, should all become Lawyers. He would not have them, who have so good Shares in the Kingdom, and are fit to have so much Authority in it, absolutely ignorant in the Laws and Customs of their own Country: And where can they come so naturally to the Knowledge of it, as by spending some Time in that Company, where many of the Nobility, and the best Gentry of the Kingdom, spend some Part of their Youth together in Conversation, by which they know the general State of the Kingdom, and much of the Temper and Humour of the People; and spend more or less Time there, as it is suitable to their other Purposes, not One of a Hundred of those who come thither staying or affecting to be a Lawyer? And without doubt, as many Men are much the better and the wiser for making some stay, how short soever, in those Societies, so never any Man was yet the worse for having been there. *London* is the Place confessed to which they must resort; and how can they come better to understand *London*, than by living first in that Conversation where they are not restrained from any Thing they have a Mind to do, nor confined to any Thing but what their own Virtue and Discretion shall dictate to them? But I doubt, the Inns of Court will take it ill of me, if they should know that I undertook their Defence.

B. You have performed it very well, Alderman, and they are behold-
ing to you for it; what I shall say will have less Credit, because I shall be looked upon as a Party. I am sure those Societies in their first Institution were intended for the Nobility and principal Gentry of the Kingdom, and the Inns of Chancery erected for those of an inferiour Condition and meaner Fortune, who could not support the Expence of the Inns of Court; but when they had made a good Progress in the Study of the Law, removed from thence to the Other that they might be called to the Bar; and most of those, though not with equal Success, made the Law their Profession: whereas those of the greater Quality made but a short Stay, and betook themselves to such a Condition of Life that pleased them better. God be thanked, there are now many of the Nobility who do not only come amongst us for their Pleasure and Observation, but for their Profit to, and pursue their Studies with notable Industry and Ability, and profess the Law with great Success; the Judges, and all who are in Authority, giving all Respect, Countenance and Encouragement to all Persons of that Condition and Quality. And truly they who stay not so long with us, are in no degree the worse for the Time they spend in our Company; they are better lodged then they can be in most other Places, may use all those Exercises, and enjoy all those Recreations, which any who live in *London* can do; they live in Conversation with the best Gentlemen of the Kingdom, many of whom are to be their Neighbours hereafter in the Country; and they commonly esteem one another the better for having begun their Acquaintance in those Places, where they have been acquainted with each others Nature and Parts much better than they would have ever been, by the Distance which their living near one another naturally keeps them at. If they take no delight in reading our Books, they will hardly avoid, by keeping us Company, to know more of the Kingdom and the
Government

Government thereof, and of what concerns their own Estates and Fortunes, than they would come to understand in any other Conversation: And if they happen to make Acquaintance with any ingenious Person who follows his Study, as it is hard to avoid, since here they find those with whom they have conversed in the Universities, he will instruct them in such Statutes and other Parts of the Law which are like to concern their own Interests, and in which they are well pleased to be inform'd, and find themselves in any other Fortune the better for those Notions.

Bp. We do not look upon those Corporations as much devoted to our Function and Interest; though truly I think we entertain those Imaginations and Jealousies with too little Reason; I am sure I know many of them at least as good Friends as any the Church hath. But let that be as it will, I cannot but acknowledge that the spending some Time there is a most excellent Ingredient into the best Education of the Nation; and indeed I believe most Men find, I am sure I do, a wonderful difference between those who have passed through that Breeding, for how little Time soever, and other Men who have spent their Time in Travel, or in the Liberties of the Town, without looking into those Societies, and it may be despising them; which commonly they do, who do not understand them: I say the Company and Conversation of the former is much more pleasant, more pertinent, more innocent, than that of the latter.

D. My Lord Bishop hath robbed me of all I meant to have said. I told you the other Day of one of your fine Gentlemen, all covered with Feathers and Ribbons, who came to inherit a fair Estate by me in the Country; how little he understood of any Business, and how much he complained that he knew not how to spend his Time: I could tell you another manner of Tale of other Men of the same and of better Quality, who, having spent some Years in the Inns of Court, and afterwards in the Court it self, and in Travel, when upon the Death of their Fathers, or upon other Reasons, they come to live amongst us, betake themselves presently to Business, understand their own Estates, the Nature of the People, and all the Affairs of the Country, with such a wonderful Promptness and Expedition, that the Eldest amongst us may learn of them in those Things which we believe we best understand; and if they bring with them Courtesy and Generosity (without which no Man was ever beloved in the Country) they suddenly attain that full Measure of Reputation and Credit with the People, that they may dispose them as they please. And I doubt the Nobility in all Countries have much less Interest, since they have taken such Care that their eldest Sons should know nothing of the Law, nor how to spend their Time in any serious Study or Conversation; which makes them decline the Company of all those who are wiser than themselves, as Persons who affront them, by knowing more than they do; and so entertain Commerce and Familiarity only with such, whose Parts are as inferior to them as their Quality.

C. You have given me new Courage to reply to my good Friend of the Court, who was, I think, unjustly offended with me; and he might have observed, that by assigning but two or three Years to the Inns of Court, (which I doubt is more than they will spend there) I did not intend to make his Lords and other Great Men to be Lawyers, which will require much more Time; nor did I forget (as he will find anon) the Court, or Travel, or Camp, all which are to have great Parts in the Education I propose: But I do not think that the Age of Seventeen (when, if not sooner, I bring them from the University) is proper for either of those Three; and

therefore I prescribe another Stage, where they may rest, and stand for some Time at Gaze, that upon a full and clear Prospect they may chuse for themselves; for, as I told you, the Fathers have well discharged themselves in Point of Education, when they have brought their Sons to the Inns of Court: what remains must be the Effect of their own Wisdom and Virtue; for though it is presumed that they will still desire and observe the Counsel and Advice of their Fathers in the Course they are afterwards to steer, yet it is as much presumed that the Fathers will refer very much to their own Inclinations, which they are sure will carry them even against their Commands and Prescriptions. You remember that I have hitherto taken more Care that they may learn no Ill, than that they may be taught any thing that is above their Comprehensions, or to which their Age and Faculties do not very much correspond; and therefore I have been solicitous always to have them in the Society of those of their own Time or thereabout, and under the Government of honest and discreet Men, who would form their Minds to those Virtues which are most commendable and dispose them to a Detestation of all Vice and Impurity; in truth, that they might learn nothing but what they were taught by those who were entrusted to teach them, and that such Arts and Sciences might be infused into them with their Exercises, and other Genteelnesses, as their Age and Inclinations were disposed to, as well as capable of; as great Care and Circumspection being to be used to what the Vessel can receive and retain as what the Masters can distribute. But now, when their Passions and Appetites are grown to that Strength, that they will claim some Share in the Government of themselves, and rather are to be led than drawn into those Ways in which they are to walk, and all that we can expect from them is, that they will weigh and consider, before they resolve how to dispose of themselves; we carry them to such a Station, where (as I said before) they may repose themselves, and more usefully consider what they are to do; and, it may be, you will be the more easily reconciled to this Station, if you compare it with any other Course they can take. You see we have left the University at Seventeen Years of Age; and whatever you resolve to do, *London* must be then visited, and some Time spent there, in order to whatsoever is to be done afterwards. Will you have your young Men take Lodgings in private Houses, eat their Meat in Ordinaries, and make their Acquaintance with such Men as they can find by Chance? Or will you rather wish to accommodate them with much better Lodgings in those Societies, where it is probable they will find their old Friends, and can never miss Men of good Manners and good Conversation? And though the Discipline of those Places, being Societies of Men and not of Boys, is not such as can compel Men to live wisely or honest or temperately, yet Men of ill and debauched Manners are so much observed there, and under so much Discountenance and Disesteem, that they seldom take Delight in remaining long there, and they grow weary of those who they see are ashamed of them. My Countryman very well described, according to his own Observation, the Abilities of those, who, but passing by, gather the Gleanings of that kind of Education; and I assure you, I have always thought it so proper for any Course of Life that we can dedicate our selves to, that if I had a Son (and you know that we who have none do always breed our Children best) whom I desired to make a Statesman, and fit for the nearest Trust about his Prince, I would oblige him to spend Three or Four Years in the Study of the Law, and in the serious Observation of the Proceedings of Courts of Justice, before I would send him into Foreign Parts for those

other Qualifications which are necessary for that Trust, and all which he shall attain the sooner and the better for that first Erudition. There is nothing we can apply our selves to, in which we shall not find the Benefit and Advantage of this Breeding; all the World sees how much those Men exceed in managing the Civil Affairs of the Kingdom, and in governing and improving their own Fortune. I assure you, I think my self the better Soldier for the Time I spent in the Inns of Court; and we always observ'd that those who came from thence to the Army, (as many always did) understood the Profession sooner, because they applied themselves more diligently to it, than other Men; and upon my Conscience, the Alderman hath often found, that he did buy and sell better for the Experience and Method that he learned there. And after all this, you see that I take up but Two or Three Years of their Time there, till they are Nineteen or Twenty Years old, when they are like to chuse better for themselves than sooner; and even in that Time, they come (by frequently resorting thither) to have some Information and Understanding of the Court. The Inns of Court were always looked upon as the Suburbs of the Court it self, into which Men have been frequently transplanted out of the other with very good Acceptation. In that Time they accustom themselves to, and improve their Skill in, all the Exercises of Dancing, Riding, Fencing, Tennis, to the Perfection wherein their Growth and Strength of Body contributes very much; they frequent the Stage and other innocent Recreations and Meetings, which the Town affords; and make Journies into the several Counties of the Kindom, and so observe the different Humours and Dispositions of the People, and the difference in the Soil and way of Living; and then they betake themselves to Travel, and are much fitter to observe the Nature and Manners of other Courts and Countrys, when they understand so much of their own, and will learn nothing but what they shall be the wiser for; they will see Armies, and march with them, and observe the difference in the Discipline of several Nations, and judge which is best; and they will return so accomplished to all Purposes, that whether they apply themselves to the Court, or to the Country, or to the Camp, they will carry a great Reputation with them, and succeed in whatsoever they go about. And I would here finish my Discourse, with asking your Pardon for having talked so much in Matters you all understand much better, but that I must not leave my Friend of the Court unsatisfied in one Particular in which he seemed much offended, and I believe many Lords and Ladies would concur with him, if they were present at our Discourse; that is, that I put no difference between Elder and Younger Brothers: which indeed I do not, and heartily wish their Parents would not, I say in their Education; in all Things else, or after they are bred, let them distinguish between them as they please. It was a very pertinent Scoff which the Alderman vented, when he said, it ought first to be debated whether it were fit that Elder Brothers should be wise Men. I cannot express the Indignation I have for the ridiculous Preference and Precedence which is given to the First-born, who is taught to know before any Thing else, that he is an elder Brother; that is, that he shall have Estate and Observance enough, how little Wit soever he attains to; let him be sure to be proud and ignorant, for he hath where withal to maintain both. Nature and the Law gives him Precedence, and a greater Share in the Inheritance, but that is no Release to the Father of any Part of his Duty in the Education. It is most unreasonable, that because he is born the better Man, he should be worse bred than his younger Brethren; and he is so much the worse bred, if there be less Care
and

and Pains taken to make him wise, and to make him learned, than is to instruct the other. It is quite otherwise in that Country, to which we most resort to mend our Breeding, where the greatest Care is taken for the Education of the eldest Son, who is to inherit the Title and the Estate, and commonly the Office and Charge; and they do commonly prove the ablest of the Family. How far it is from being so with us, you all know. I could wish heartily that it were possible so far to conceal this odious Prerogative, that no Man should know that he is an Elder Brother till he be Twenty Years old, that he may be as honestly bred as the Younger. If I had not tired you already, I could rave an Hour longer upon this Argument that drives all Patience from me.

A. You have satisfied me very fully; and I do confess to you, (which many Courtiers would not) that you have not only convinced, but converted me; and I shall, whilst I live, commend the Inns of Court for a necessary Part of our Education; and whatever they do else, I would be glad all Elder Brothers were bound to spend some Years there. It is an unhappy Privilege they have gotten, to be the worst bred of the Nation, as undoubtedly they are. And if their wise Mothers are content that they may be so long out of their Sight, as to be sent into *France*, at that unseasonable Time of their Age when they get nothing by it, they are impatient till they come Home again; and they never suffer them to be absent again, put them often in Mind of their Quality, and how much better Men they are than any of their Neighbours, and leave them to improve their Understandings, and to form their Manners, by a great Familiarity with the Servants of the House, who with all their Sauciness are sure never to forget their Duty in commending them for fine Gentlemen.

Bp. I have no Exception to any thing the Colonel hath said, all which I take to be very prudently urged; but I am troubled at somewhat that he hath not said. I know him very well to be a conscientious and a pious Man, and therefore I do the more wonder, that, in all the excellent Schemes for Education, he hath not spoken of inculcating those Principles of Religion into his Youth, that may preserve them against those Temptations which they may meet with any where, and cannot but meet with in their Travel, to which he hath already dismissed them. Methinks they might be better fortified, and carry more Antidote with them against that Poyson which they must expect will be administered to them in many Companies and many Places abroad, from which and all other Inconveniences God only can protect them; and therefore they ought constantly to ask his Divine Assistance.

C. I do thank your Lordship for the Animadversion, and humbly desire you to enlarge yourself in such Instructions concerning their Duty to God, as may be like to make Impression upon them at those Years; for I do confess, if they have lived to the Age of Twenty, and are then sent to Travel without any Religion, they are like to make a very unprosperous Voyage, and to return worse, to all Purposes, than they went out. But I will not deny to you, that I did believe I had better provided for their Instructions; and that if they lived to that Age with the Sobriety, Innocence, and Virtue, which is the first and best Tincture of Religion, which I prescribed, and was most solicitous to provide for, they can hardly be without such a Proportion of Religion as is most suitable and agreeable to their Understanding. It cannot be supposed, that they can pass the first Stations without that Practice of ordinary Devotion, which is a Part of the Oeconomy of all honest Houses, and without being informed of as much

of the Mysteries of it as they can comprehend; in the University they come to know more of the Policy of Church-Government, and they will hardly avoid knowing more of Controversy in Religion, than I could wish they should so soon be acquainted with, since it cannot be presumed that they can be enough informed of the Grounds of it. At the Inns of Court they will learn what Reverence is to be paid by all Men to the Laws of the Land, and the Penalties which attend all who endeavour to make any Alterations in Religion, being in all these Places obliged to that formal Practice and Exercise of Religion as by the Laws are established. All this Knowledge, and this Practice, with that Integrity of Manners which I principally prescribe, and endeavour to provide for, is, I conceive, even Religion enough for the Age of Twenty Years, and I wish we could possess it when we are much older. I long to see a good Negative Catechism of Religion; that Boys might be taught what Vices and what Sins are inconsistent with any Religion; that all Men might be enough informed, and enough put in mind of those crying and exterminating Transgressions, against which the Doors of Heaven are so shut, that they can obtain no Entrance into it. If there were such a short Catechism as this, I would teach it to Children from their Cradle, and it should serve for their full Instruction till they are Men. The Warmth, and Zeal, and Piety, and Devotion, which are the Effects of Religion, never find room in the Breasts and Hearts of Men who have not been long conversant in the World, and observed the Vanity and Inconstancy of it; which less than Experience can never make manifest, and it were well if that would do it. There is nothing I would more carefully avoid throughout my Education, than intoxicating the Heads of young People with the Fumes and dark Notions of Religion, which, by raising Passion and Prejudice against Things and Persons which they cannot understand, corrupts that Evenness and Modesty in their Temper and Nature that makes them easy and grateful to themselves and others. I do not send my young Men to Travel, that they may make Profelytes, but that they may mend their own Understandings, and improve their Manners. All the Instruction I would give them, with Reference to Religion, is, that they return with the same which they carry out with them, and that they never enter into any Disputation upon it; which never did produce Good, and very often great Inconveniences. I cannot but put your Lordship in mind of the great Caution and Prudence you used in this Point, when you and I first met together in a Catholick Country, and the Mischief that was like to befall us both, by the Indiscretion of one of our Countrymen, who would needs dispute with a *Jesuit*, who was treating us with great Civility as Strangers, and shewing us their College, till he was so transported with Choler, by the Contradiction of our Companion, which we did all we could to restrain, that he left us rudely, and with some Threats; that our Disputant found it necessary to leave the Town that Night, and with as much Speed as he could, the Province; and it was some Time before you and I (who could not with Convenience remove) recovered our former Confidence, and the good Opinion the People of the Place had before had of us; and we could never recover the good Grace of the *Jesuit*, though we laboured it by Application.

Bp. I remember it very well, and how angry and troubled we were both, and foresaw the Inconvenience that did follow, upon that Gentleman's too much Forwardness to dispute with an Adversary whom he thought inferior to him, as in truth he was; and you and I hoped that the Fright that he was thereupon in would, for the Time to come, have restrained

that Appetite, and made him more wary in disputing against the Religion established in a Country where he was a Stranger; But that Itch did not leave him, till he was afterwards, in a Country more jealous and severe, cast into Prison, from whence he was not released in many Years. Men who Travel where a different Religion from their own is professed, are bound in Discretion to give no Offence when they need Protection; and I do confess, that you have prescribed those good Rules through the whole Course of your Education, to make them conformable to the Dictates of Wisdom and Innocence, by the Oversight and Direction of good and virtuous Men; which cannot but include that Information of the Duty they owe to God, and their Dependance upon his Providence, that is necessary for their Years; and I do concur with you, in not desiring that the Controversies upon Religion should be communicated and enlarged upon, to Men of their Age, till they have Understanding and Judgment competent to examine the Rise and Grounds thereof; their Office is to retain, not propagate their own Religion. I shall not forget your Negative Catechism, it being an Argument very worthy the most serious and deliberate Disquisition; yet I cannot deny, that I do still wish, since we cannot presume that all these excellent Rules which are prescribed will be enough observ'd and practis'd throughout every Stage your young Man hath passed, who will yet be as solicitous to enter upon this last of Travel, and are most assured that he will not pass that without frequent Assaults in Points of Religion; which though the Civility of Strangers would willingly decline, even in *Rome* it self, if they were not importunately engaged by those of our own Country, who forgetting the Favour and Indulgence they receive here, impertinently vex and disquiet all our young Travellers with stale Arguments in Religion, and engage others to perform the same good Offices, and contrive all the Affronts they can devise to be put upon those who will not hearken to them: I say, that I do wish that some proper and particular Ballast may be provided for this Voyage, that may keep the Ship steady and untottering in that troublesome and unruly Sea. I would have them well instructed and acquainted with so much of the History of their own Church and Religion, that they may not be out of Countenance, upon the impudent Reproach (which is generally believed by the Catholicks abroad, who know no more than what they are informed by the Writing and Discourse of some seditious *English* Priests) that the Religion of the Church of *England* hath no other Original or Foundation than the inordinate Lust of *Henry* the Eighth, who would no longer continue a Catholick, because that Church would not permit him to put away his own Wife, a Lady of great Virtue, and by whom he had Children, and to marry another Lady who was younger, and on whom he was unlawfully enamoured; but may confidently aver, and inform them, that all those Discourses are groundless, and mere Calumnies; that the Church of *England* received not its Alteration and Reformation from King *Henry* the Eighth, who lived and died of the same Religion he professed when he writ against *Luther*, and was so far from countenancing and favouring Protestants, that they were every Day put to Death, and burned as Hereticks, and some of them suffered in that manner a very few Days before the Death of that King; that he did no more in excluding the Pope's Authority from intermeddling in his Kingdom, than his most Catholick Predecessors had frequently done in the most Catholick Times, upon less Provocation; nor was that Exclusion, because he would not grant the Dispensation desired, which he promised, and was enough inclined to give, as one

of his Predecessors had very lately given to *Lewis* the Twelfth of *France*, upon less justifiable Reasons; but because the Pope had presumed, upon the Importunity of the Emperor, with whom the King had then War, and meerly to gratify him, to excommunicate the King, to deprive him of his Crown, and to absolve all his Subjects of their Obedience, and of the Oaths which they had taken to him; and as it was time for him to expel and abolish that unruly and exorbitant Power, which had no Foundation of Right but what former Kings had granted and often restrained, and was now done with the Advice and Consent of the Catholick Bishops, so he did no more than *Lewis* the Twelfth of *France* had done to Pope *Julio* the Second upon the same Provocation, and yet neither of those two great Kings departed from the Catholick Religion, or favoured Protestants. The Reformation that was made in the Church by the succeeding King was done with all the Deliberation and Order imaginable, with the Advice and Consent of a National Synod, and the Concurrence and Approbation of all the Nobility and Commons of the Kingdom; in which Reformation all that is of the Essence of Catholick Religion, or had unquestionable Foundation in Antiquity, was still reserved and preserved, and is still practis'd; which needs no other Manifestation, than that whoever contradicts whatsoever is determined in the Four first General Councils, is at this Day declared a Heretick, and to suffer accordingly; that this being done without the least Appearance of Force and Compulsion, and with that Regularity and Solemnity that no Alteration, with reference to Church or State, was ever made in any State or Kingdom of *Europe* more warrantably, all the Kings Subjects are bound to pay the same Obedience to his Laws, as the Subjects of other Princes do to those established in their Dominions; and to have the same Reverence and Submission to the Constitutions of their own Church, as others have to what is enjoined by the State and Church under which they live, without condemning or censuring those who differ from them in Opinion, which the Church of *England* doth not presume to do. And as the *Gallican* Church doth challenge, and require, and enjoy many extraordinary Privileges, Immunities and Exemptions, which the *Roman* Church denies to be its due, and would deprive them of, if it were in their Power; so the Church of *England* hath as large Rights, and owes no Subjection or Submission to any Foreign Judicatory or Power under Heaven. I doubt whether all our young Travellers, though of Twenty Years of Age, be enough informed or instructed in these Particulars. I know very few Catholicks abroad understand the Truth of it, or will know what to reply to it when they are informed; and I doubt, many of their best Friends who stay at home, are not enough acquainted with these Advertisements. When they are thus armed, I have no more to wish and advise on their behalfs, than that some pious and discreet Friend will digest and frame a short Prayer to be used by them in their private Morning and Evening Devotions, wherein they may pray for God's immediate Protection and Deliverance from those particular Temptations, which the several Countries through which they are to pass are most like to assault them with, or their own natural Inclinations to dispose them to; it being such an Obligation upon them not to embrace those Sins against which they pray so constantly and solemnly, that the Disposition is become very depraved before it can be induced to mock and contemn God so impudently: and so I leave them to the Influence of his Grace.

C. I do so fully concur with all that my Lord Bishop hath said, that I do confess that he hath qualified our young Travellers much better than

than I left them; and I do heartily wish that all who are sent abroad, and all that stay at home (who for the most part I am confident want it) were amply acquainted with those important Advertisements, and so well prepared and instructed for their Chamber-Devotions.

B. We are all very much beholden to my Lord Bishop for the necessary Assistance he hath given to our Travellers, to be firm in their Religion; and I receive very much Information and Delight by the Colonel's Discourse, whose Reason seems to have as much Strength as his Sword: yet I desire him to consider, and that we may all consider and weigh, whether this last Stage of his Education, and which he seems to think gives Lustre and Perfection to all that hath gone before, Travel, be at all necessary to be undergone. We all found too much Folly in our last Conference, and so many Defects in our Travellers, that I was in hope we should now have shut it out from having any Part in our Education which we are now framing, and that our Inland Breeding would have been very sufficient to enable us to serve both our King and our Country. We can all remember when very few Men travelled beyond the Seas, except it was to be a Soldier, which is a Profession we have learned too much of without Travel: Now very few stay at Home, or think they are fit for good Company if they have not been beyond the Seas. I desire to know whether there be not too much Affectation in this Particular, and whether that Charge may not be well spared, and the Kingdom have as many wise Men without it?

A. I do not remember, that we did in our last Conference concur in the undervaluing the Benefit of Travel; we were indeed unanimous in the Opinion, that sending Children abroad before they are able to judge or observe any thing, was an unhappy spending that Season of their Age which they may employ much more prosperously; but that Objection being removed by so compleat an Education at Home, and being so well qualified before they begin their Travels, they cannot but be very much improved by their Observation and Experience of other Countries. I shall take upon me to speak only of that Province in which I am best acquainted, the Court; and sure whosoever intends to spend his Time, and hopes to make his Fortune there, will be upon great Disadvantage, if he be utterly unacquainted with the Language and Manners of Strangers. It would be a great Dishonour to the Court, if, when Ambassadors come thither from Neighbour-Princes, nobody were able to treat with them, or converse with those who accompany them, in any other Language than *English*, of which none of them understand one Word; not to mention how the King shall be supplied with Ministers and Secretaries of State, or with Persons fit to be sent Ambassadors abroad, if Men who may pretend to that Rank do not by Travel make themselves capable of those Employments,

D. I pray how do the *Frenchmen* and the *Spaniards* make themselves fit to be Ministers of State, and Secretaries, and Ambassadors? They seldom understand any other Language than their own. The Court of *Spain* is not out of Countenance, nor thinks itself dishonoured, because none of them can entertain an *English* Ambassador or his Train when he comes thither; and though the *French*, out of their natural Gayety and Levity, travel frequently hither, very few of them endeavour to learn *English*. I am informed, that there is not one Person of Quality, and who hath any Part in Business in either of the Courts of *Spain* or *France*, who speaks or understands one Word of *English*; they have inferior Persons who are Interpreters when there is Occasion; and thus they conduct their Affairs without

without putting themselves to the Trouble of adding any other Language to their own. We have many of us known an Ambassador from a Neighbour Prince reside here for the Space of sixteen Years together, and after that Time return Home with no more *English* than he had when he came thither. I wonder how it comes to pass that we alone cannot come to be wise Men, or so much as be fit for Employment at Home, except we improve our Understanding by Travel: We must visit *France*, and *Italy*, and *Spain*, and make ourselves Masters of their Languages, that we may make them Masters of our Money. I assure you, I have heard a very wise Man say, who had been an Ambassador many Years, and both understood and spoke *Spanish*, *French*, and *Italian*, and some of them equally to those of the Nation, and protest, that we had made better Treaties by Ministers who either did not understand, or would never adventure to speak the Language of the People with whom they treated, than by those who took upon them to discourse and treat in the Language of the Country: The former, having faithful Interpreters, did all their Business in Writing, and rarely committed any Over-sight; the other, delighting in the Skill they thought they had in the Tongue, gave many Advantages in their Discourse; in which they use great Excess, and when they reduce what is agreed into Writing, consent to Expressions which have either a doubtful or different Interpretation to that which Strangers generally understand, and of which they can never afterwards be allowed the Judges. And these Over-sights, they say, are principally made in *France*; which doth now exercise that universal Tyranny, that they rarely and very unwillingly sign any Treaties, but those which are made in their own Language; contrary to all former Precedents of *Europe*, where the Treaties between Princes have been always debated and made in that Language which was looked upon as common to all, the *Latin*, and which is still I hear in Use in all Places, *France* only excepted. I confess, I would not have our Nation so fond of other Languages, till other Nations be as solicitous to learn ours; I do not like our Condescensions. The Colonel I know prescribes his Education only for Noblemen, and Persons of great Fortunes; I hope an honest plain Country Gentleman may have his Estate well inherited by his Son, who hath never travelled, nor gotten Diseases to which he was not born. I have kept my Son at Home, and he is now too old to be sent to learn Languages; and I think I shall have Credit enough with him, to persuade him to bring up his Children after the same Manner. If the Colonel would give them Leave, I would have them marry and get Subjects for the King, lest they should do worse in that Time when he would have them Travelling.

E. I doubt not but they may be very honest, yea, and very wise Men, though they never travel; and, it may be, if we were obliged to name half a Dozen who are in our Opinions the wisest Men, we might concur upon those who were never yet out of their own Country. The Colonel hath prescribed that Method for the breeding of great Persons, who are able to be at the Charge of it, which may render them what they ought to affect to be, very extraordinary Men; and yet, it may be, others who are educated in a different and more contracted Manner, may arrive at the same or greater Perfection. They, who ride out of the High-way, do sometimes come to their Journey's End, sooner than they who keep the known and best Road; but they do oftener break an Arm or a Leg in the Adventure, at least meet with some other Accident that retards them. Without doubt, they who travel into foreign Countries so qualified as hath been proposed, and without which they may more profitably stay at Home, have great Opportunities

to improve their Knowledge and Understanding, which is the Business of Life; and if it be in every Man's Observation, that he who never was out of the Place in which he was born, of what Degree or Quality soever he is, is not so wise or so conversible a Man, as he who hath taken a View of the greatest Part of the Kingdom, lived in *London*, conversed much in the Court and the City; it may be as reasonably concluded, that they who see other Countries, and carefully observe the different Policy of Kingdoms, and the different Nature of Nations, will return with a proportionable Addition of Prudence; and if they do not, it proceeds from some incorrigible Infirmary and Defect of their own. It cannot be expected, that he who would never be good for any thing at Home, shall return an able Man by Travel; it is enough that able Men are made more able, and wise Men much wiser, by the Experience and Observation they make by Travel. I will not argue with my Countryman, whether the understanding several Languages be absolutely necessary to the Office of a Statesman; I well know, that there have been and are many extraordinary Men, who, notwithstanding they have not that Talent, perform all that can be expected from them with very notable Ability; yet we may believe that those very Men would do more Wonders if they were supplied with the other Faculty. And I fear his Children may find as many Diseases at Home, as they would do if they went Abroad; and therefore I hope he hath better reason for denying them those Advantages, amongst which the understanding several Languages is not the greatest: and yet I take even that to be attended with many Benefits; nor will our neglecting the Language of other Nations persuade them the sooner to learn ours.

Bp. In truth we ought not to undervalue that single Advantage of understanding several Languages, though it be not the greatest that Men attain by Travel. The most signal Punishment that God inflicted upon Mankind, since the Deluge of the World, was the Confusion of Languages, when Men in an instant ceased to understand what one another said; and by which many Men believe that the greatest Part of Mankind came to be deprived of the Knowledge of God himself, and to be first disposed to the Practice of Idolatry: And the greatest Benefit he conferred since the Death of his Son, was the Gift of Tongues, for the Advancement and Propagation of Christianity. And as Language is the Key of Knowledge, if we can by our Industry attain to the Understanding and Use of many, we must needs improve our Knowledge, and consequently our Wisdom, beyond those who only are acquainted with their Mother-Tongue. And we have more need of that Improvement, because, being in an Island, we and our Language are more inclosed from the other Parts of the World, and the Conversation thereof, than they are who live upon the Continent; and we have few excellent Books, excellently translated into our own Tongue, with which our Neighbours are abundantly supplied. And let us be as much delighted with our own as we will, and as indeed we have reason to be, we cannot give it that Reputation Abroad, and dispose other Nations to learn it, with the same Concernment as they do the Languages of those whose Dominions and Empire are farther extended. And Languages have the Fates of Empires, and rise and fall in Reputation as the Governments do. Since the *Latin* hath ceased to be a Language, if ever it was any, which I am not sure of, at least in this present Age, the *French* is almost naturalized through *Europe*, and understood and spoken in all the *Northern* Courts, and hath almost driven the *Dutch* out of its own Country, and almost sides the *Italian* in the *Eastern* Parts, where it was scarce known in the last Age; so that

that it is too late fully to affect an Ignorance in theirs, because they will not take the Pains to understand ours. However, they lose much by not understanding ours, and we may gain much by being conversant in theirs. And I must conclude, that they who have spent some Years in Foreign Parts, with that Discretion and Observation which they ought to do, return, for the most Part, wiser Men into their own Country than their Neighbours who have not been at the Charge of those Enquiries. And as this is very evident to those who have much Conversation with them; so I believe, that even our Countryman himself, who is not over affected with that kind of Breeding, cannot but observe, that those who have passed that Education, and been conversant in Foreign Countries, when they come to live upon their Estates in the Country, they appear more conversible, and of better Parts and Abilities, than they who have always dwelt at Home, even in the Government of their Estates, and understanding the Affairs of their Country. But I desire the Colonel's Advice and Information, since much good may be gotten by Travel, which is the best Method and Order to be observed in the Visitation of Foreign Parts, what Countries Men are to begin with, and where to finish their Peregrination, upon this Supposition, that they do not assign above Three Years to that Enquiry; for I know there is to be no End of Travel, if the Curiosity be to be satisfied.

C. My Lord, I will tell you my Opinion of that, after I have first endeavoured to answer somewhat that hath fallen from two of our Friends, who I believe will hardly be converted to have a good Opinion of the Usefulness of Travel it self; and I must acknowledge, that I have expressed my self very ill, if I have given them Cause to believe that I would have all Men to Travel; or that they cannot be wise or fit to serve their Country, even in the Places of the greatest Trust and Administration, without it. It hath been said, and said truly, that we have all known Men of the most sublime Parts, and inferior to none in the Exercise of the highest Offices, who never saw any Country but their own; and it is as true, that many who have spent very much Time Abroad, return with no more Wisdom and Discretion than if they had remained still in the Village where they were born: Travel cannot make Men wise in spite of Nature. That which is a natural and useful Effect of it, which is the understanding of Languages, may be attained without it, by Study and Industry at Home; and we all knew a Noble Person, who was Secretary of State, who, besides his Perfection in the *Latin* and *Greek* Tongues, understood all the modern Languages very exactly, and spoke *French* as volubly and as exactly as he needed to do, without having ever been in *France*, by the meer Benefit of that Breeding when he was young, that I have recommended to you, and which he always cultivated by his admirable Industry. So that if Languages were the only Benefit to be affected, Men need not be compelled to fetch it so far off. But my Task hath been to propose the most and the best Accomplishments that can be attained by Education, to those who can be at the Charge of complying with their own Curiosity; and are not so much inclined to dig and sweat in those Mines from whence nothing is to be got without indefatigable Industry, which can conquer all Things. And surely Men of that Condition, who are liberally supported and well attended, have much greater Advantages by their Travel, being well received and countenanced in all Courts, and by Persons of the most eminent Rank and Quality: Whereas Men of inferior State seldom visit Courts or great Persons, or are considered by them, and so acquire no more than their own Virtue and Observation suggest to them; which yet often yields a better

Harvest

Harvest than the others Contribution. The Two great and good Ends of Travel, are to improve the Parts and Understanding we carry out with us, by the Observation of, and Conversation with, Persons of Eminency Abroad; and to mend our own Manners and Defects by the Sight and Example of those who are better instructed and more cultivated. All Men do, in some Degree, cure and reform their personal Infirmities and Defects and Behaviour, by frequenting the Company of such who have been more liberally bred. But though personal Weaknesses and Indecencies may be to a good Degree reformed by this Access, yet there are some that are not so easily discerned and discovered by others, nor possibly by our selves, because few Men are free from some Tincture of them; which ought to be as much expelled as the other. There are national Vices which are seldom acknowledged, and never abolished in the same Climate; the Inconvenience, and Uncomeliness whereof are quickly espied, and willingly avoided, by the Practice and Custom of other Nations. We are generally looked upon Abroad by all Nations who have only visited our Country, as the proudest People in the World, and the most ignorant; and every one of those Nations are justly branded with more odious Vices: and yet their Reproach upon us is so far true, that we do not generally abound in Courtesy, nor are generally versed in the Knowledge of many Things which are familiar to other People, Excess of Curiosity being never attributed to the *English*. And I must tell you, the Custom of this Age in visiting Foreign Countries more than we were accustomed to formerly, hath very much lenified that Stubbornness, and filed off much of that Roughness, which used to appear in our Behaviour and Demeanour; we are more civil and courteous to Strangers, and to one another, than the Age before us was accustomed to be. And being less visited by Strangers than any other Kingdom in *Europe*, and having necessarily so much to do with Strangers, it is very requisite we visit them; and if we are not much the wiser for it, it proceeds only from our invincible Ignorance, and the Stupidity of our Nature, that renders us incorrigible. It is no wonder that I forgot that Part of Education, which my Countryman hath assigned to his Sons, in that Time which I prescribed to Travel, that is, to marry and get Children; for having never had leisure to think of it my self, I always believed a Man married soon enough, who deferred it long; and his Departure in this from the Doctrine of his Fore-fathers, who never allowed their Sons to marry so soon, gives me some hope that we may find him more pliant to the Practice and Manners of the present Age. I shall now, in as few Words as I can (for I am ashamed of ingrossing so much of the Discourse to my self) apply my self to satisfy my Lord Bishop, concerning the best Order to be observed in the Choice of the Parts through which our young Men ought to direct their Travel, being guided by no other End or Purpose than a lawful Curiosity; for particular Designs must be complied with by particular Application: And in this Distribution of their Time, they are principally to consider where they may see most, that is worthy their Imitation or Observation; and where most that is fittest to be declined and avoided, which is a Part of Knowledge little inferior to the other; and proportion their Residence in those Cases accordingly. What Parts soever we propose to visit, to which our Curiosity usually invites us, we can hardly avoid the setting our Feet first in *France*, where we shall quickly renew the Acquaintance we have had with that Language, by the Practice and Custom of speaking it. And because our Travellers shall return thither again, I do not wish that their first stay shall be longer there than to take a View of

Paris

Paris, and of all those principal Towns that are worth Two or Three Days stay, between that and *Marseilles*, from whence they may enter *Savoy*, and so continue their Journey throughout *Italy*; which, as it is in some Respects the most fruitful and pleasant Country in the World, and most abounding in Variety of all Kinds, and therefore worthy to be seen, and diligently to be considered, so there is much more to be learned and observed, in order to be avoided than practised; the People being generally civil and courteous in their outward Carriage and Behaviour, but proud, jealous, faithless, and incapable of Friendship or much Familiarity; the Nation generally, whatever Knowledge they have, being the most without the Practice of Christian Principles, of any to whom Christ hath been preached; the foulest and most brutal Acts of Assassination and Murther being comprehended within the warranted Discipline of Revenge, and those Sins avowedly acted there that are scarce named in other Countries; and therefore our Travellers had need of all their Wariness, Circumspection, and Discretion, which will keep them secure, the People being naturally full of Humanity towards all Strangers, who live with Freedom and Security in all Places, and in none with more than in *Rome*, which is the Center where all Nations meet as in their own Country. Civility, Frugality, pleasant and facetious Wit, the general Rules of Policy, Reservation, and Wisdom, are not better taught and learned any where, than in *Italy*; but for fear that they may be too easily kneaded and incorporated with Diffimulation, Covetousness, Ill-nature, Craft and Prophaneness, and a Contempt of Religion, I would not have my Friends stay longer in those Parts than is necessary for the attaining the Language, which may be very well done in less than a Year, and which lets them into the Pleasure of many excellent Books, which I think, are not yet communicated, I am sure not with the same Spirit in any other Language, to the World. I should from hence advise them (if the Passage be safe) to transport themselves by Sea to the next Port of the Kingdom of *Valencia*, which being the Garden of *Spain*, they may, without long stay, make their Journey to *Madrid*, where they will find less Delight to reside than in any other Place to which we have before commended them; for that Nation having less Reverence for meer Travellers, who go Abroad without Business, are not at all solicitous to provide for their Accommodation; and when they complain of the want of many Conveniencies, as they have reason to do, they wonder Men will come from Home, who will be troubled for those Incommodities: Yet the Gravity and Punctuality of that Court, is very well worth the seeing; the sovereign Dignity is no where better preserved or submitted to, nor is Majesty beheld in greater State; the Language is excellent, and quickly learned, and incloses as much pleasant and jocular Wit as any; and the Probity and Sincerity of the Nation, annexed to a true and worthy Sense of Honour, and Detestation of any low and base Action, will efface and wipe out the vile Diffimulation and Craft you brought with you out of *Italy*; and you will wonder at nothing more, than to find so great Reverence and Superstition paid to the *Roman* Religion, and such profound Veneration to the Person of the Pope, when you had left so much Contempt of both at *Rome* it self. Your stay need not be long in this Court; nor can you remain long in any other Part of the Kingdom, without an Enquiry, who you are, and what you would have? When you have taken a View of the pleasant and regular Plantations of *Aranjuez*, and the magnificent Structure of the *Escorial*, you may return by *Burgos* and *St. Sebastian*, or through the Kingdoms of *Arragon* and *Navarre*, into *France*; where you will be

glad to find your self, in respect of many Conveniencies you have been long without since you left *Italy*; and you may then make what haste you please (through all those pleasant Parts you saw not when you went by *Lyons* for *Italy*) to *Paris*; where I am very willing you shall stay very near a Year, to call your self to an Account of all you have seen and observed, and by that frank and open Conversation to unlearn the dark and affected Reservation of *Italy*: And tho' you should meet with Dissembling enough, it hath not that Solemnity nor Malignity that is in the other; there you shall find the Way to unbend all the Stiffness, and put off much of the Formality you had contracted in *Spain*, and to put on a Chearfulness and Vivacity, that is most suitable to the Disposition and Honesty of your own Country, leaving that Levity and prophane Wit and Fantasticalness of Habit behind you, which is peculiar to that People and Nation. And I have yet left you Time enough to make your Return through *Flanders* and *Holland*, where your Curiosity shall be satisfied with beholding very much of Delight, which you had never seen before; the Country it self, the Fortifications, the Rivers which Nature never gave them, and the wonderful Beauty of the Towns, being very different from any other Part of the World. But all this being only Business of the Eye, and the Walls and the Houses being much more worth the seeing than the People, who yet for their Industry, are to be commended, and imitated, and the Sight of Three or Four Towns yielding the Prospect of all the rest, you shall not spend so much Time there, but that you may be in *England* before the Three Years are expired, (for *Spain* did not take you up Half a Year) and then you are ripe and fit to dedicate your self to the Court, to the Army, to the Country; and if you have a mind to follow our Countryman's Advice, you may marry and get wiser Children than you would have done sooner.

E. Upon my Conscience you have made all this haste, only to gratify him in marrying and getting Children; otherwise you would sooner have quitted *Spain*, which neither in respect of the Country, Climate, or People, is very delightful to Strangers, nor (say what you will) doth much contribute to the Wisdom of your Travellers; and you would rather have chosen to have returned through *Germany*, a noble and warlike Nation, where there being so many stately Courts of Princes, such convenient navigable Rivers for Passage, and besides the Courts and Habitations of Princes, many noble Imperial and free Towns very magnificently built, and prudently governed, there must be many Things very worthy to be viewed and observed; and there being so many Princes and sovereign Towns of different Religions, the Policy of the Governments must afford great Variety of Matter for Observation. If I had been in your Company when you left *Italy*, I would have been very importunate with you to have declined *Spain*, and entered *Germany* by *Trent* and *Inspruck*, and so visited the magnificent Courts of the Empire.

C. I think you would, and I know the reason, because you have been in *Spain* already, and have never seen *Germany*; but you should not have prevailed: Trust me, you had gone out of your Way; you would have found there all the Vices of *Italy*, without any of the Virtues, and the Vices to be avoided with more Difficulty than in the other Climate, the Pride superiour to the other, and the Drunkenness more dangerous than the Jealousy of the other: They are indeed a warlike Nation, and fitter for the War than Conversation, their greatest Humanity and Courtesy having in it such a proud Formality, that is very troublesome; in a Word, there

there is little in their Manners, or their Politick Government, which a Man would wish to bring away with him, and some of their Faults are too easily affected and transplanted; and therefore they who out of their own Election spend much Time amongst them, want the Advice of Friends, who have been there before; and if they remain there one Year, they had need stay two in *France* afterwards, that they may entirely forget that they were ever in *Germany*; and till they all pay Obedience to one Prince, it shall not be in my Itinerary; and then let those look to themselves, who live nearest to them.

D. Truly I think the Colonel carried us far enough from Home, and to give him his Due, hath been a very provident Governour throughout his Journey, and hath made his Travellers so very discreet, that they have brought Home all that is eligible out of all Climates, and left all that is inconvenient behind them, which is a very rare Providence. But Colonel, if it should so fall out, that your young Men do not follow your Counsel, as they seldom do if it be good; if instead of the Wariness and Wisdom of the *Italian*, they bring Home nothing but Craft, Ill-nature, and Dissimulation; and from *Spain*, nothing but Superstition, and Irresolution; and return with all the Vanity and Prophaneness of *France*, not to speak of their casual Disease; had they not better have stay'd at Home, and been contented with the honest Breeding of their own Country? Such Returns as these have been made from the Capital of Travel. One of you appealed to my Observation, how our Travellers behave themselves, when they come to live in the Country. I must tell you, we observe, that they who have been most in *Italy*, keep the worst Houses, and have least Religion, and as little Good-nature. I like *Spain* the best of all the Places, because they seem to make a right Judgment of Travellers; but since you have been so generous, as to leave all Men to their Liberty, I am likewise contented that all but my own Children shall Travel, who have a mind to it, and I believe some Men may be the better for it. But since I forbear to trouble you with any Questions concerning Foreign Countries, I pray, Colonel, why did you, before you begun your Travel, so much commend to your Disciples the Custom of seeing Stage-Plays, as if it were a commendable Exercise; methinks not restraining them from it, is Liberty enough in all Conscience, there needed be no Encouragement to so vain an Expence of Time, which many Men doubt whether it be lawful.

B. Indeed I had the same Thoughts with my Countryman upon that Part of his Discourse. I very well approved the Advice he gave, that Children at School, and Scholars at the University, should be accusom'd to act Comedies and Tragedies, by which they attain it may be to an Assurance and Gracefulness of Speaking; but when he hath made them fit to come to the Inns of Court, and so must know how to spend their Time better, I wondered to hear him commend the going to paultry Play-houses; which I look upon as one of the Corruptions of the Age, and a Licence too much indulged, not only to the Expence of their Time, but even to the Waste of their Estates; for I cannot but think it a great Un-thriftiness, and therefore not fit to be countenanced by Authority, when an ordinary Citizen, who is to maintain his Family by his Industry, will spend a Shilling to see a Play, when he hath not gotten so much that Day to support his Wife and Children: I say nothing of the Prophaneness and Obscenity which dishonours the Stage, and much offends all pious and chaste Ears, nor of that Licence of disguising the Sexes, Men putting on the Clothes of Women, and Women those of Men; an Offence in the Judgment

ment of many against the Text it self. I wonder what pleasure Men can take in sitting idle Two or Three Hours together to hear those Fellows prate. I confess, I have sometimes found my self obliged upon some Festival Occasions to be present at those Plays, but with so much Weariness both of Body and Mind, that I would have given more to be absent, than they who love them best ever pay at the first Presentation.

E. It is a very good Argument why you should not frequent those Places, but none why others should not, who at the same time find Information and Delight there; and I doubt, if you would propose some of those Exercises or Recreations which are grateful to you, many of us should believe them to have more of Labour than Refreshment. The Mind hath as great Need of Recreation and Relief as the Body hath, the Fatigue of the Spirits being as grievous as that of the Limbs; and the finding wholesome and innocent Supplies for both, is a good Part of the Business of human Life; and though there are many excellent Exercises which confirm the Strength of the Body, and improve its Activity, some of which in a Degree recreate the Mind too, yet there are very few prepared purely for the Mind, and of those none so efficacious, and which administer so much Pleasure and Content to it as those Representations upon the Stage; which need no other Evidence to prove how universally grateful or acceptable they are, than the daily Concourse thither of Persons of all Degrees, Humours, and Constitutions; the grave and the light, the cholerick and the flegmatick, the jolly and the melancholy Man, find somewhat there to please them, and to allay that Passion that is most troublesome within them. Good Books indeed yield great Delight, and more Benefit, but they work upon the Spirits most, and require proportionable Relaxation; and there is no Sort of Men resort more greedily to Plays, than they who are most intent upon their Books, the Noise of the Stage giving great Life to the Silence of the Study. If there be too great a License permitted in the Language and Expressions, or any other indecent Liberty affected, to the Prejudice of the Honour and Reputation of any, under satirical Descriptions and Characters, it is the Fault of him whose Office it is to pull up all those noisome Weeds; the not reforming whereof should be severely punished, and the Transgressors much discountenanced: It is true, many rigid Men heretofore thought not fit to give any Countenance to such Pastimes, partly out of the Morosity of their own Natures, who would exact a more severe Account of Mens Time than the best are able to give, or than the Master of it will require, and it may be because the Practice of them then was more scandalous and offensive than they are now, and at best they were not infallible in their Judgments. For the promiscuous acting the Parts of Men and Women, I know no Exception that would not remain, if the whole Action were to be performed by one Sex, it being as unlawful, in their Sense who make the Exception, for Boys to act the Parts of Women, as for Women to appear like Men; so that there is no Way to satisfy those Scruples, but by having no Women in the Play, which would break the Hearts of the Spectators, and kill Plays themselves, which cannot have a natural Subsistence without the Company of Women. The Imagination of transgressing the Text is ridiculous, since there is no Purpose of concealing or confounding the Sexes by this temporary Disguise, which is that which is there defended, lest the dissembling the Habit in common Conversation might introduce Customs unwarrantable and dishonest. I cannot deny but that I and many of my gravest Neighbours frequently resort thither for our harmless Divertisement; and I assure you, when I have found myself even

even oppressed with the Weight of Business, or uneasy Cogitations, I have made haste to a Comedy with as sharp an Appetite as the greatest *Epicure* can do to the greatest Feast, and have been equally filled and satisfied : Ah ! it is a Refreshment and Advantage worthy of the Protection and Countenance of the wisest State.

A. If I did not know my Counsel's Disease, that he loves to have always somewhat to do, I should more wonder at his Impatience in seeing a Play, which I would not be debarred from for any Pension or Office. I am of the Alderman's Constitution, and when I have lost my Appetite and my Mirth, and am even overwhelm'd with Melancholy, I go to a Play, and all I had lost, and leave my Cloud behind me. A good new Play supplies the whole Town with Wit for a Month, or renews that which was ready to expire ; no Man ever plotted against the State there, or contrived how to ruin the Church in those Assemblies ; and I much doubt whether so many People meet so innocently together in any other Place.

C. My two Friends who have spoke last, have with so much Spirit vindicated me for the Esteem I declared myself to have for the Stage, that I need say little in my own Defence ; and the less, because I doubt two of my other Friends will as hardly be reconciled to Plays as to Travel, by all I can say to them. You see I have been as solicitous at least to provide proper Exercises and lawful Recreations for the vacant Hours, as good Employment for the most serious Part of their Time, through the whole Course of their Lives ; for it is in those Seasons of Leisure and Laziness, that Vice hides in least discerned and taken Notice of ; and when I had brought our Youth to *London*, that is the great and publick Stage of the Kingdom, I thought I could not gratify them more reasonably, than by putting them in mind of the Theatres of the Town, where Action and Representation, Words and Perspectives appear with the most Life and Vivacity, and with the least Violence offer'd to Nature, that have been ever yet offer'd to the World in any Part of it. I must still suppose, that all due Care will be taken for the Castigation of all rank Expressions and personal Reflections, and then I am not afraid nor ashamed to pronounce, that they are a Profession of the most innocent Mirth, Wit, and Instruction, that ever was or can be made for the Delight of a Nation. It is amongst the greatest and most difficult Mysteries of Government to bring the People together to Recreations and Spectacles, which may delight and inform, and cannot hurt them ; and this Art the *Roman* Senate studied when it was in its most flourishing Condition ; and the first Institution of the Stage was the Product of that wise Deliberation, though it never arrived at near that Degree of Perfection that waits upon our Theatres. All Nations we are acquainted with, have such natural Inclinations to Gazing and Spectacles, that they crowd to those which are not in themselves very pleasant, as Executions, and other ingrateful Objects. It is better by much to comply with this natural Curiosity, by providing Places for them to resort to, and to be pleased in, than by Inhibitions and Restraints to extinguish that harmless Appetite, and divert into Pensiveness or Murmuring. For this Reason wise Princes have frequently exposed themselves (which is the most beloved Object) in splendid Shews of Triumph, to the View of their Subjects, and contrived Occasions and Opportunities in that Manner to entertain them ; and next that Prospect of their real Sovereign, and his graceful Exercises

in Masques, and Dancing, and Riding, the View of imaginary Courts and Princes upon the Theatre, the Success of noble and honourable Designs of heroical and virtuous Persons, how supposititious soever, and the Disappointments and Destruction that accompany or attend the wicked Contrivances of infamous Persons, yield great Pleasure and some Profit to the Spectators. In these Conventions there was never any Sedition or Outrage contrived, that was not fairly composed before the Actors left the Stage. I protest to you, I have thought myself often the wiser for having been there, and, it may be, the honestest for the Discourses I have heard there, which make greater Impressions by the seasonable Application of good Rules to proper Occasions, than the same Things pronounced dogmatically in more serious Assemblies; and therefore I invite my Friends thither, when they are vacant from more important Employments, the Seasons of the Theatres being at those Hours when the Mind most desires Relaxation; and those Minds which never care to be relaxed, doubt are never bent enough; there is no Temper so much to be desired, as a loitering lazy Nature, and a Disposition stupid and unmoved by Variety. As I look upon the Theatres amongst the Conveniences and best Divertisements of *London*, so I am as solicitous that my Friends in the Country refresh themselves with the proper and commendable Recreations of the Country, which have ever been Hunting and Hawking, which being manly Exercises, keep the Body still vigorous and in health, and the Mind better disposed to honest and publick Thoughts. I do often lament the Decay of this Pleasure amongst our Noblemen and Gentlemen who are more pleased with sedentary Occupations, and love to travel in Coaches, and at their Ease; so that, whereas we were wont, in any great Road, to meet a Hundred Horsemen in a Day, we now see not Ten; the Lawyer and his Clerk, the Citizen and his Apprentice, and the Lady and her Maid, being crowded all together into one Coach. Remember I tell you this over-thriftiness will be lamented in the Decay of Health and natural Strength, which was cherished by the Fatigue of Riding; and by the want of Horses, if ever the Kingdom shall stand in need of such a Body as is most necessary for its Defence, there being a visible Decay in the Breed thereof; so that if it were not for the Liberty of Transporting (against which there may be many weighty Objections too) few would be at the Charge of breeding Horses, which by the Scarcity are raised to an unreasonable Price. But I have run this Chase out of the way to gratify my Country-man, who hath ever been a Huntsman, and I am sure is of my Mind in what I have said last.

D. I am so, and thank you for it; and must tell you that none of your Travellers ever keep us Company in our Field Sports; their Bones cannot bear leaping a Ditch, nor their Perriwigs a strong Wind; they are only for Chamber Exercises, and such Recreations as may not disorder their Hair or shake their Joints. I wish all your Divertisements were as lawful and as wholesome as our Hunting and Hawking; but I believe my Lord Bishop is not of your Mind in all that hath been said concerning your Stage Plays.

C. If any thing had been urged that Conscience could have a real Concernment in, I should willingly have appealed to his Judgment; but since nothing of Weight hath been offered to that Purpose, I thought it good

Manners not to ask his Opinion in an Argument, in which, though he may probably think as others do, he may not be so forward to speak what others say.

Bp. I thank you for having spared me; nor had you any need of my Vote, your Party for the Theatres is strong enough without the Concurrence of the Bishops; who out of Discretion, and to decline giving Offence, avoid being present at, or giving themselves leave to use many Recreations which they do not condemn in others. It were happy if Men could always entertain serious Thoughts, and keep their Minds fixed upon the most necessary Objects; but since that is no more possible, than to keep the Body in perpetual Labour and Fatigue, the next Happiness is to incline to those Diversions as may really refresh and recreate the Spirits, and not corrupt the Affections; and wise States have always complied with the Humour and Levity of the People, in devising and providing Shews and Spectacles for them, which may please and delight them. And at this Day the Government of *Spain* is so far indulgent to the Fancy and Inclination of that Nation, that they rather choose to gratify them upon several Festival Days in the Year with the Exercise of the *Toros* (which is baiting many wild Bulls, by Men on Horse-back, and on Foot) than to take from them a Spectacle that Nation hath been accustomed to, and delighted with for many Ages; though the Rudeness and Barbarity of the Contention is such, that few of those Days pass without the Slaughter of some Men, and never without the Destruction of many of the bravest Horses in the World; and though this beloved Custom had its Original from the *Moors*, whilst for so many Hundred Years they possessed and governed that Kingdom: Nor hath the Pope himself (in whose Person is comprehended all their Religion, and their Reverence devoted accordingly) Authority enough even by his Bull of Excommunication, which hath been issued out to that purpose, to restrain and abolish that inhuman Practice; but the King finds it necessary still to provide and allow, and even to be present at those Spectacles. It is therefore wisely done, to contrive and countenance those Diversions that are in themselves innocent and delightful, though even those by an immoderate Application and Discontinuance of what is more serious may prove Corruptions. I cannot but confess, that in my own Opinion, for which I will not be arraigned, the Theatres being regulated and carefully administered to, are amongst the best and most innocent Diversions; and if I had Power enough to reform it, I know not any thing I wish changed and altered, but the Action of Women upon the Stage; which, though I cannot determine to be in it self unlawful, possibly too much exposes the Modesty of that Sex, in the Persons of inferior People: and if upon Observation and Experience, any Scandal or other Inconvenience hath resulted from thence, there ought, for that reason, to be an absolute Alteration of the Custom; for none hath been found when all Parts have been performed by the other Sex.

And now, Gentlemen, I am to give you my very hearty Thanks for the Liberty you have given me, to be present at this excellent Conference, where I have been much delighted and much instructed; and though I do confess my self to agree with the Colonel in all that he hath said concerning the Benefit by Travel, I do not dislike what my other two Friends have said against it; and shall give my Verdict between you according to
a good

a good Precedent I find of a Judgment given by a Reverend Doctor, in a Controversy between his Parishioners, about the setting up a May-Pole, which some desired and others opposed, That they who would have a May-Pole, should have a May-Pole; and they that would have no May-Pole, should have no May-Pole. I wish my Friends would follow the Colonel's Directions in all Things, and I am confident they will be much the wiser for Travel; and that they who like my other Friends Advice better, if they be governed by them in all Things else, may prove very honest and able Men without it.



CONTEMPLATIONS

AND

REFLECTIONS

UPON THE

Psalms of DAVID.

Applying those DEVOTIONS to the Troubles
of the TIMES.

JERSEY, *Dec.*
26. 1647.

THE
REPORT
OF THE
COMMISSIONERS
OF THE
LAND OFFICE
FOR THE YEAR
1861



in an
that
your
to f
and
form
flec
oth
Scr
nab
the
(h
con
for
the
fo
wa
ta
T
us
ri
h
c
fo
i
S
u
n
l



TO MY
CHILDREN.



MY CHILDREN, You have undergone so great a Share with me in all the Inconveniencies and Afflictions of my Banishments, that it is but Justice to assign you a Share likewise of whatsoever I have gotten by them: and I do confess to you, I found so great a Serenity and Tranquility of Mind in composing these Considerations and Reflections upon the Psalms of *David*, that I am willing to believe that the reading them may administer some kind of Relief and Ease to you in any Trouble or Adversity to which you may be exposed: At least that they may yield some Hints to rouse up other riper Thoughts of your own, which may produce that Ease and Relief, by disposing you to suffer no Day to pass, without at least reading some of the *Psalms*, and carefully to observe, whether there be not in every one of them, somewhat that doth immediately concern your selves, and refer or reflect upon your own Thoughts, your own Hopes and Fears, or some other of your Affections and Passions. Though there is no part of the Scriptures towards which we ought not to have all the Reverence imaginable; yet it is plain, both by the Esteem and frequent Use of them in the Church of the *Jews*, and the Injunction of all Christian Churches, (how disagreeing soever amongst themselves) that the *Psalms* be more constantly read, than any other Part of the Scripture; that in all Times, somewhat extraordinary hath been thought to be contain'd therein, for the Instruction, Encouragement, and Reformation of Mankind, and for the rendring our Lives more acceptable to God Almighty: And he was a very learned Man, who thought the Book of the *Psalms* to contain the Sum and Abridgment of all that is in the Old Testament: That all that *Moses* hath derived to us in his History, or prescribed to us in the Law; and whatsoever the rest of the Prophets writ in exhorting Men to Virtue, or foretelling what was to come, is all comprehended in the *Psalms*. We may in truth believe, that whosoever is very conversant in the *Psalms*, cannot be ignorant of any Thing that is absolutely enjoined to be done, or not to be done; and of any Thing that is absolutely necessary to be believed, throughout the whole Body of Scripture; and it hath a greater Testimony, and is more frequently urged for the Advancement of Christianity throughout the New Testament, than any other Part of the Bible. And if there could be any Doubt made that any Part of the Scripture, which the concurrent Te-

Testimony and Authority, and in that respect Infallibility of the Universal Church hath derived to us, were not the Word of God, it could not be suspected of the *Psalms*: For besides the Testimony that *David* gives himself, * *The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue*; St. *Paul's* Evidence can admit no Scruple, *Wherefore as the Holy Ghost says, To day if you will hear his voice, &c.* and many other Places in the New Testament, which cannot be so well applied to the Divinity of any other Part of the Scripture, as to the *Psalms*.

I began to exercise my self in these Meditations in the time of a former Banishment, when to the Publick Calamities with which the King and the Kingdom was afflicted; and to my own Particular, my forced Absence for so many Years from your Dear Mother, and from you, the Nature of the Employment I had from the King, and the Scene upon which that Employment was to be acted, added very much to the Melancholique of the Condition I was in; being then an Ambassador in a proud Court, (as that of *Spain* will always be) to solicit the Cause of all Kings, when no other King could be prevailed with to think himself concerned in what as great a Monarch as any of themselves, and as unlike to have been reduced to that Extremity, had so lately suffered before their Eyes; in a Court where very few Men knew, or cared what was done three Leagues out of the narrow little Town wherein they spent, and desired to spend the whole Term of their Lives; and where all (some very few excepted) believed that no Protestants could be worse used than they deserved to be, and that no body had any Obligation in Conscience to relieve them if they could; in a Court, which at that very Time maintained an Ambassador with those very Regicides, against whom all the Kings of the Earth ought to have denounced Fire and Sword, and Extirpation; and in this Court I was to solicit for Aid and Assistance, in the Behalf of a young Protestant Prince, driven out of his Kingdoms by the Power of bloody Rebels, who were hated, and feared, and courted at once. Every Day administered such Matter of Mortification to me (though towards my own Person they were civil enough) that I quickly discerned, that what I laboured and longed for, could not come to pass by any Hand that held a Scepter upon Earth; that he only who could pull down all other Kings, and bring Desolation upon all other Nations, could raise the low and miserable Estate of my King and Country; and I must confess the frequent reading of the *Psalms* of *David*, gave me great Hopes he would do it. The more I read and revolved the Subject Matter of those *Psalms*, the inevitable Judgments pronounced upon prosperous Wickedness, Pride and Oppression; and the Protection and Exaltation promised to those who suffer unjustly, and are not weary of their Innocence, nor depart from it upon any Temptation, I found Cause enough to believe, that both the one and the other might possibly fall out, and come to pass in this World, as it must unavoidably do in the next. Methought I found so many lively Descriptions of our selves, and our Condition, and so many lively Promises of Comfort and Assistance, as if some of them had been Prophecies concerning us, and intended to raise and preserve our Souls from Despair: And upon this Ground I proposed to make some Reflection upon every *Psalms* in Order, from the Subject Matter, (I do not say from the Occasion of writing the *Psalms*, which I doubt is not well known to many who have taken upon them to determine it;) or rather

* 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. Heb. iii. 7.

rather from some Expressions in it, to the drawing some Consolation to myself, by raising Hopes which might seem to be supported by so strong a Foundation: And I was not disappointed; but proceeding in the same Method at some Hours dedicated to that Purpose, I went through about half the *Psalms*, whilst I continued in that Employment; and found my Mind so well composed, that, I thank God, I never entertained any Temptation, nor ever felt an Inclination in my self, to get out of the miserable Condition in which I became honestly involved, and in which I underwent as many Pressures and Hardnesses as can be imagined, literal want of Bread excepted, and very narrowly avoided, by any other way than God himself should prescribe and direct.

It pleased God by a Chain of Miracles at last, to bring that to pass which all the World thought impossible to be done; He suffered the King to make all those Attempts for his own Vindication, which his Reason, and Industry, and Virtue could dictate to him; to endeavour for a Union and Conjunction with his own Subjects, who had been the Original of all his Sufferings, to conquer those who were grown worse than they; but God blessed not that Union and Conjunction; those Hands were too weak to hold up in Battel, and too proud to hold up in Prayer. God would not suffer that People to redeem the Mischief they had done, by any noble Actions, but condemned them to undergo the Penalty of it by very notable Sufferings, by and under those who had been enabled by them to commit much greater Wickednesses: The King's Army was defeated, himself *snatcht* out of the midst of his Enemies, by the immediate and powerful Arm of God Almighty, and by him conducted through dark and untrodden Paths, and sometimes thro' that Army itself, that would have preferred the Surprizal of his Person before the Victory they had obtained; until it had safely delivered him upon a Neighbour Shore, free from the Violence and Treason of his Rebel Subjects, but not into the Arms and Compassion of tender Friends and Allies; He had the Liberty to enjoy a very wholesome and pleasant Air, but had very little more to enjoy than the Air. Here I had again the Honour to be restored to his Person, with his gracious Acceptation; and to be in some Trust and Credit with him, through those uncomfortable Peregrinations, which the Jealousies and Hard-heartedness of the Neighbour Princes and States exposed him to; between whom there seemed a Contention which should use him worst; and until (when there was a very rational Despair of all human Help) the same good God, even in a Moment, reduced all his People to him, and restored him to his People, to the Wonder and Amazement of all the World. And in this miraculous Restoration and Prosperity I had my full Share, which I enjoyed many Years in an envious Proportion of the King's Favour and good Opinion, which I had endeavoured to preserve by all the Industry and Fidelity a Servant so obliged ought to perform; having (God knows) never any thing before my Eyes, or in my Purposes, but the King's Honour and Happiness, in a full Possession of all the Rights and Prerogatives, which by the Law, and the Constitution of the Kingdom, are due to him; and the Vindication of the Church from those monstrous Impieties and Prophanations under which it had been exercised these late Years, and still too much labours under. And I have always, and do still believe, that this blessed Temper of Government, in the King's being possessed of his just Power, and the Church's

Church's being restored to its Dignity and Administration of Discipline, is the best and the only Means to make the Kingdom flourish in Plenty, and secure by Peace, and to enjoy all the Happiness that a Nation is capable of: and that an unreasonable Affectation in King or People, to grasp more Power than the Law and Constitution of the Kingdom hath assigned to either, is the way to continue and improve that Distraction and Insecurity which those Appetites first brought upon us, and still seem to cherish; and that there is no way left to preserve the Liberty of the Nation (which must be dear to every honest Man) in its native Integrity, from that License and Confusion that hath invaded it, and must in the End reduce it to Slavery, but to raise the Dignity and Authority of the Crown to its just Height, and to repair those Breaches and Demolishments in the Bounds which inclosed it from Invasion. It is a very weighty Expression that *Seneca* makes of the Miscarriage of *Pompey's* Popularity, *Qui eo redigit populum Romanum, ut salvus esse non posset, nisi beneficio servitutis*; he had suffered them to be so far transported with the Sense of their Liberty, that there was no way left to preserve them, but by restraining them in such Bonds of Subjection as they had not been used to. And let those Men take heed, who desire nothing so much as to lessen the Veneration that is due to the Crown, as the way to raise the Authority and Greatness of the People; I say, let them take heed that they do not deprive the People of that Shelter and Protection that can only preserve them from Conquest by another Nation; which would quickly convince them of their Folly, by the dismal Experience how much a nobler Liberty they had enjoyed than any other People in *Europe*: And I do heartily recommend this Consideration and Reflexion to you all, that for the Love of your selves, and the Liberty of your Country, as well as out of Duty to the Divine Providence, you always endeavour to preserve the Dignity and Authority of the Crown.

But to return to my self; I have too much cause to believe and confess, that though, to the utmost of my Power, and according to the Understanding God hath given me, which no doubt hath many defects, I have not failed in the Performance of my Duty to the King, and to my Country; I have abundantly failed in my Duty to my God; and not enough remembered his particular saving Blessings and Deliverances of my self and Family in the Time of my Adversity and Banishment, nor the Vows and Promises I then made to him; and for that reason he hath exposed me to new Troubles and Reproaches, for Crimes I am in no degree guilty of, and condemned me to a new Banishment in my Age, when I am not able to struggle with those Difficulties which encompass me. I am sure I discontinued this heavenly Exercise upon the *Psalms*, and suffered those Papers which I had with so much Joy and Satisfaction written in my most disconsolate Condition to lie neglected, and unreflected upon, during the whole Time of my too great Prosperity. I neither reviewed my own weak Contemplations, nor spent so much time as I ought to have done upon the Subject-Matter of them, in the Consideration of the *Psalms* themselves, and the whole Body of his Scriptures; and God in his great Mercy awakened me out of the Lethargy I was in, by Reproaches I least apprehended, and a Judgment I least expected or suspected; and drove me out of that Sunshine that dazzled me, withdrew the King's Favour from me, out of that crowd of Business that stifled all other Thoughts, and condemned me to such

a Solitariness and Desertion, as must reduce my giddy and wandering Soul to some recollection and steddiness. With what hard and uncomfortable Circumstances I entred into this my Second Banishment; the severe Treatment I receiv'd when I thought my self in a Place of Security and Repose; the sharp Sickness of Body and Mind I was to contend with, whilst I was not suffered to rest, when I was not able to stir, is all well known to you; and I do not enlarge upon, because, writing this to you in a perfect Serenity of Mind, I would not give you or my self the disturbance of any melancholick or uncharitable Animadversions. When under this rigorous Visitation I began to discern some hope of Health and Repose, I thought of preparing some Diet for my Mind, that might recover it to the Sobriety and Method of Thinking, which after any notable Distraction, is a Preparative not easily made: And in order thereunto I writ to one of you, to transmit me a Case of Papers, in which there was some rough Draughts, and imperfect Conceptions, upon several Arguments, which I had a Purpose to polish, when I should find my self in such a Place as I might confidently reside in; and I was in no such Place till I came hither to *Montpelier*, where I found my Lady *Mordaunt* newly recovered from a deep consumptive Sickness. To her extraordinary Civility and Address, I must impute the very good Reception and Accommodation I found here: For she having by her very worthy Behaviour and Carriage obtained a very great Esteem from all Persons of Honour here, had taken some pains by her good mention of me, and the *Post* that I had sustained, and some advantageous Discourse of my Relations, to prepare them in such a Manner to bid me welcome, that I found a very extraordinary Respect from all Persons of Quality, Men and Women; which continued during my Stay here. Now I begun to find my self vacant for my own Recollections, God having restored me to a good Degree of Health, and thought to examine those Papers which I had sent to you for, and which you had sent to me in a Trunk, that till then I had not looked into; but I found, that I had either mistaken my Directions, or you in the Execution of them; for the Case you sent me was not that which I desired, but another which contained many loose Papers, which I wondered how they were got together, nor can to this Day ever call to mind that I did ever put them there; but do conclude, that they might by chance be all before me, and that being suddenly called away, or some Persons coming suddenly in upon me, I might put them all together into that *Porte-fueille* in which they were sent to me. There I found a Parcel of Six Sheets of Paper not half written, which as far as it was written contained the Continuance of those Reflections I had made upon the *Psalms*, as far in order as I had gone; the last *Psalme* there being the Seventieth *Psalme*, which by the Date it bore, appeared to have passed my Hand at *Antwerp*, shortly after my return from *Spain*; and from that time I had never made any Progress in that devout Design. I felt within my self a Reprehension from my own Conscience; and looked upon this Accident as an Animadversion of Providence, to renew and continue a Course of Devotion I had so long intermitted: I congratulated to my self the Mistake you had made, and wished that all which I had composed upon that Subject had been likewise sent to me, that I might as well have surveyed and reconsidered that which was done, as disposed my self to prosecute the Argument in the same Method: But these Papers, the first Page whereof was 124, suffered me

to look no farther back than to the Sixty Sixth *Psalms*, one half of which was contained in that Page; what was before, you will find in my Papers which remain somewhere under your Charge: I was not solicitous afterwards to draw those Papers to me, because what first occurred to me as reasonable, had not afterwards the same force. I thought by perusing what I had formerly done, I might be able to avoid Tautologies, and entertaining the same Conception again, which I had formerly vented upon the precedent *Psalms*; but I concluded upon further recollection, that caution to be unnecessary, and indeed impossible to be observed; for there being so many *Psalms* upon the same Argument, it is very hard to avoid those Reflexions which are very near the same, which formerly occurred upon the same Subjects in other *Psalms*, which I do not conceive ought to be industriously avoided; and therefore I observed a contrary Course, by never reading what I had said upon the like Subject, and so not affecting any variation, left my self at liberty to entertain those Notions and Expressions which flow'd upon the Disquisition; and if the same occurred after some time that I had perused the former, they pleased me the better, as the most natural Results and Conclusions from those Places; and yet I think you shall not often find the same Matter and Manner of expressing it in those *Psalms* which are upon the same Argument; for I put a great deal of difference between the Argument, and the Subject and the Occasion of the *Psalms*; as the Application of Patience to great Affliction is the Argument of many *Psalms*, though the Subject, and Occasion of writing those *Psalms* may be very different.

From this Accident administred by you, or rather, as I said, by Providence, I thought fit to enjoyn my self a new Task: First, to set aside some direct Time to revolve that part of Scripture which is comprehended in the *Psalms* of *David*, and to fix my Mind upon the Contemplation of them; and then to begin again where I left, and to prosecute the same Method of Meditation to the End of the whole Hundred and Fifty. And in one respect I had much more reason to dedicate a select Part of my Time to some pious Recollections, by one unhappy Circumstance which accompanies this my Second Banishment, which I did not sustain in my former, when I was never without the daily Exercise of my Religion, in a Congregation of the same Faith, performed by some very learned Divine of the Church of *England*; as during the Time of my Embassy in *Spain*, I had a worthy and a learned Chaplain, tho' he died a little before I came from thence, who both Preached and Prayed, and administred the Sacraments to my Family, according to the Ordinances of that Church: Whereas, to my unspeakable discomfort, during the whole Time of this my Second Banishment, I have been without a Chaplain, and consequently without any Exercise of that Religion which I have always embraced with my Soul, and in which I resolve to die, how destitute soever I may be of the Exercise of it at my Death: For they here, who would be thought of the same Religion, now they see the Church redeemed from that Ruin which they were not displeased to see it under, perform none of those Functions in those Seasons; and as if the Sacraments were ordained only for healthy People, never administer them to any who are not strong enough to come to the Temple to receive them. I thank God, from the Time that I resumed this Exercise, I found my Mind every Day more agreeable to my Fortune; and I never omitted the Prosecution of it, on those Days which

I had assigned to it, except want of Health, or intolerable Pain restrained me, till I had finished the Course I had proposed; and when I had done that, I cannot but tell you that I was very well pleased, and found some inward Content, that assures me that I shall yet outlive this Storm. And I am willing to flatter my self, that the reading these Discourses may not be unpleasant or unprofitable to you, to whom God hath given Parts capable of raising higher Considerations, than these which administer to you the Occasion; and therefore I do not only desire, and take the best Care I can, that these Recollections of mine may come to your Hands, whatever becomes of me; but that if by the Advice of your learned and pious Friends, you shall think fit to publish them to the World, which I neither command nor forbid, I wish they may come into the Light with this Dedication to you, that all Men may know the Joy and Comfort I take in you: And that amongst the infinite Blessings which God hath vouchsafed to confer upon me, from my Cradle to this Time, I look upon it as the greatest, that he hath given me such Children: You, whom God hath raised to a State and Condition so much above me, and your Father's House, that by it he hath inverted the Course of Nature, and made my Duty a Debt to you, have yet behaved your selves towards me with the same Kindness, the same Tenderness, and even with the same Duty, as if you were still under the Discipline and Dependence of my own Family: And you Two, who are in a Condition, by God's Blessing, to be able to do me more Good than I can to you, have prosecuted and relieved me with the same Piety, as if all you have were mine: And you who are not yet arrived at Years to govern your selves, and are like to bear the deepest Marks of my Misfortune, have hitherto so carried your selves, that I have Reason to comfort my self with an Assurance, that as you are already what I can wish, so you will be what the others are: And I were very unworthy of you all, if I did not look upon you as a peculiar, a very extraordinary Evidence of God's Favour towards me, above all the Titles of Honour, and all the Fortune I am, or have been possessed of; and which Men of the greatest Titles and Fortunes do very rarely enjoy: Indeed such a Favour, as ought to raise our Spirits above the Jealousy and Apprehension of *Gideon*, when he said, *Oh my Lord! If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?* And even to carry us to the Confidence that *Manoah's* Wife had, *If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have shewed us all these Things*; he would not have bestowed so great Blessings upon me, and totally deprived you of the Comfort of seeing me again; and of receiving from my own Mouth my Acknowledgment and Blessing. The Presumption as well as the Desire that we may meet happily together in this World, will the more dispose us to perform all those Duties, which are most likely to bring that to pass, which we all do so much wish. However, if my Blessings may establish your Houses, you have the Son of *Syrach's* Word, *That you shall all have Joy of your own Children, and that when you make your Prayers you shall be heard*; and then this Testimony, which in Justice is due to you, may be a kind of Legacy to you.

When I began this Discourse to you, I did not intend it should have continued so long; but I have got my self methinks into your Company, and am very unwilling to go out of it; and indeed, since very probably this may not come into your Hands till I am Dead, I may a little enlarge it to you, as a kind of Codicil to my Will, in some Advice and

Coun-

Counsel. I do therefore, in the first Place, conjure and require you to continue firm and constant in the Religion of the Church of *England*, and by no means to swerve from it. You know, and you will find by many Papers of mine, that I have very dispassionately enquired into the different Opinions concerning Religion; and I do in my Conscience believe, (without presuming that there are no Errors in it) that it is not only a very sure Guide and Conduct into the ways of Salvation, but that it is by much more free from dangerous Corruptions, than any other Church that professes a Faith in Christ in the Church of God. And because there seems to be more danger of Temptation to the Church of *Rome*, than to any other Profession of Religion, in regard of the mistaken Opinion of its Antiquity, and the Evidence of its possessing a greater Part of the World, I mean the Christian World, than any other one Faith does; I think it fit to tell you, that you cannot be of that Church, without professing to think somewhat which you do not think, that is, direct Lying; or believing somewhat that is unlawful for you to believe, and if you examine well, is impossible. I do in the next Place conjure and require you all, never to swerve from the most abstracted Affection, Reverence and Duty to the King, and that no Sense of the hard Measure I have undergone, do make you less solicitous and zealous to advance his Service, by all just and honest Endeavours. You have all great Marks and Manifestations of his Favour and Goodness, which are not wiped out by his Displeasure towards me: Nor is it at all inconsistent for you to believe me very innocent, as I thank God I am in every point of Integrity and Fidelity towards him; and yet that he so much believes the contrary, that he hath not been unjust in his Unkindness and Severity. Give not your selves any Trouble or Disquiet in contending with those who have been the Contrivers of my Ruin, or in contriving the like Fate for them. You will find in one of my Papers which I composed my Mind by when my Passions were at highest, and the Indignities I received most insupportable, what my Opinion is of Revenge; which sure no body can keep in his Breast, and propose to himself to be saved at the same time: Yet I do not know that you are bound to make Friendship, or to have intimate Conversation with those who have been the Instruments of my Disgrace; which would wound your Reputations with good Men, and ought to be declined upon their apparent want of Justice and Ingenuity, if it had related only to those who had been Strangers to you. I think, and I do but think, and leave the Consideration of it to your selves, with your wisest Friends, that I may recommend to you the Vindication of my Innocence, Honour, and Integrity, by all the Ways you may lawfully use, either in publishing any thing that I my self have writ upon that Occasion, or by a more full Detection of the evil Arts which were practised to alienate the King's Heart from me, and the Discovery of the Persons who entred into that lewd Combination: For it is for your Glory, and the Honour of your Posterity, that I may not be looked upon as an ill and dishonest Man, and who made my self unworthy of the Grace and Honour I received. But then, I wish this Vindication may be made with the King's Privy and Approbation, that nothing may so reflect upon his Honour and Justice, as to bring any Prejudice upon his Service, or the publick Affairs: For I had rather still suffer under Reproach and Ignominy, than to have my Reputation and Honour cleared and restored

at the Price of his Obloquy, or in the least Degree disturbing the publick Peace in the Consequence of it.

In the last Place, let me intreat and conjure you all, by all the Affection and Passion I have always had for you, and by all your Tenderness and Piety towards me; by all the Joy and Comfort I have taken in you; and by the Memory of your dear Mother, who merited so much from you; that you will still retain that Protection, and Duty, and Respect, and Affection, which is due to each other, in the several Degrees and Stations God hath or shall raise you; assuring your selves, that the higher any Man is in Place and Authority, the more need he hath of faithful Counsel and Advice, and consequently of such a Friend as will confidently administer it: And, as I hope there will never want that Fidelity, so I pray there may never want that Confidence between you, without which all the good Wishes will not be effectual. Nothing can more contribute to this blessed Harmony and Union of Affections, than your frequent and diligent Perusal of the Book of *Psalms*, and devout Reflections upon all the Injunctions and Prohibitions contained therein; which, besides the Suppression of all those inordinate Passions and Appetites which disturb and interrupt our progress in Piety and Religion, will raise in you such a Temper of Mind, that you shall behave yourselves innocently and humbly in your greatest Prosperity, and lay in such a Stock of Patience, that you shall not be too much cast down or affected with that measure of Adversity which may befall you, be the Circumstances thereof never so uncomfortable, but support the same with Courage and Decency; and above all, will create in you such a Love of Virtue, and such a Detestation of Vice; such a Reverence towards, and Delight in good and virtuous Men, whose Conversation is grave, and Actions innocent and exemplar; and such an Aversion from, and Contempt of Men of corrupt Manners, and vicious Lives, how great and powerful soever, that the Age and the Nation shall look upon you as born to redeem them from that Deluge of Debauchery, Sin and Wickedness, as is ever ready to cover and overwhelm them; and to restore them to their primitive Lustre and Sobriety, and to the Honour and Glory that must necessarily attend and wait upon such a blessed Reformation. And I do beseech God, who hath made you so great Blessings to me, to pour down his Blessings upon you, upon my humble Prayer and Intercession.

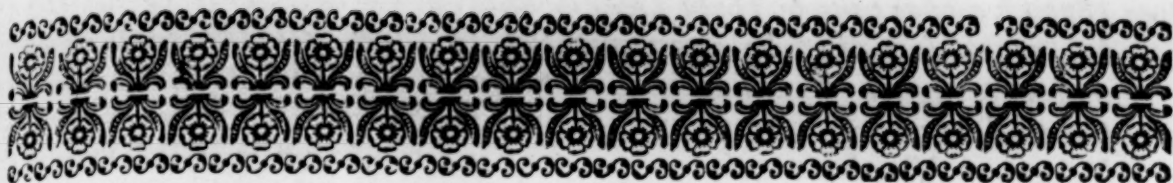
Your most affectionate FATHER,

MONTPELIER,
11. Feb. 1677.

CLARENDON.



I
up
for
tha
wor
of
tho
ther
ces
wri
any
cont
wh
con
of
Au
the
con
vid
Ec
tha
ter
tho
tho
men
not
and
dir
the
bly
the
win
fie
gre
Ea
fr
tha



P R E F A C E.



I was not my Purpose when I first entred upon this Task, to trouble my self with finding out the true and natural Meaning of every, or any difficult Place in the Psalms, that is hard to be understood, and that is oftentimes made harder by those who labour to illustrate it; nor to enquire into the Subject and Occasion of the writing every Psalm; nor who the Author of every Psalm was:

I had not then read any of the Fathers, or the voluminous Commentators upon that Sacred Part of the Scripture, and I am very glad I had not; for as they would rather have disturbed, than assisted my Meditations in that Method I then proposed to my self, and have since pursued, so they would have contributed very little, (for I do not deny to have read some of both those sort of Writers) to have clearly informed me in any of those Perplexities; there being no Consent or Concurrence in the Fathers, and other learned Authors, in the Interpretation of difficult Places in the Authors of the Psalms, and in the Argument and Occasion of writing them: Nor is a Man bound to believe what any of them says in any of those Cases, if he finds Cause to believe in his own Judgment the contrary. A Man, for ought I know, may piously believe that the whole Body of the Psalms was composed by David: For besides that it is confessed that Asaph, and the rest, whose Names are in the Title of some of the Psalms, and who were thought by some of the Ancients to be the Authors of them, were only the Masters of the Musick, who directed the Singing of them. And methinks that Citation which our Saviour vouchsafes to make, in the 20th Chapter of St. Luke's Gospel; And David himself saith in the Book of Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, &c. is a better Argument that he was the Author of that whole Book, than any that is made to the contrary. For to say that the Subject Matter of some of them, is what fell out long after David's Time, as of those which relate to the Captivities; besides that, for ought we know, those were not the Subject Matter of them; that is as well an Argument, that those which immediately relate to our Saviour himself, were not of his Composition; which no body ever doubted, since our Saviour and his Apostles Time, who vouchsafed to prove and confirm their Doctrine out of them; though before those Quotations, the most learned of the Jews did not discern that Sense in those Texts; and we may reasonably believe, that he had as well a Foresight of the Captivities, and thereby prepared some Devotions upon those sad Occasions, as of our Saviour himself; though he had not so clear Notions of either, as to foresee the Time and the Manner, and whole History of either. It is the greatest Reason of the Obscurity of very many Texts, throughout all the Books of the Prophets, that God let them only know what he thought fit they should know, for some End of his own; that is, that he only told them what Words they should speak, and what Words they should write, than

than that he always made them clearly understand the Sense of all those Words; much less that he communicated to them all the Method and Circumstances which should accompany those Actions and Accidents which they foretold, and which came to pass. It hath been very fruitless Pains which so many Men have taken, to understand the Meaning of all Daniel's Visions, when he himself confessed, that he did not understand the Interpretation of some of them himself; and they who think now that they understand them best, confess they have made the Discovery out of the Revelation of John; when others, as learned as they, do not yet think those Seals to be so clearly taken off, and the Book to be so wide open, that Men may see and read what they say is contained there; and which, if it were necessary to be known, would make the abstrusest, and most difficult Parts of History, and the most exact Arithmetick, to be necessary to our Salvation. Though the Prophets knew more of what was to come, than others did, because they knew what God said to them must come to pass, yet they knew as little, or less than others did, when he did not vouchsafe that Communication. And we may piously believe, that God had so much Compassion on his Servant David, that he did not suffer him to foresee the heinous and foul Transgressions which his Son Solomon would fall into, or the Punishment he meant to inflict upon the Folly and Sottishness of his Grandson Rehoboam, tho' he did discern what would fall out many Hundred Years after.

They who will follow St. Austin and St. Jerome, (at least if those Commentaries were written by St. Jerome) and most of the other ancient Fathers, must believe almost every one of the Psalms to contain some Prophecy of our Saviour; which to my Understanding, produces no other Effect, than to raise infinite Difficulties in the Interpretation, by introducing Metaphors, and Allegories, and Hyperbolies, to perplex the understanding of those easy Places; which by being easy, are most useful and applicable to the several Conditions of our Life, which we may fall into, whether we are in Joy or Sorrow, in any Perplexity or Distress, and under any of God's Dispensations. And many of our modern or later Divines, to be compared for their great Learning and sound Knowledge to any who have been before them, are of Opinion, that there are not many Psalms, which may not be very naturally and literally applied to those very Occasions, and the particular State that David was then in, when he poured out those Devotions, though all do not agree upon the Subject, and the Occasion. Whether Ezra, or who else, broke them into the several Pieces they are now in, is not precisely determined; but no body doubts, they were not written in the Order in which they are now marshalled; for the Fiftieth, which was upon the Reprehension by Nathan, must needs be written before the Third, which was upon the Rebellion of Absalom, and his Father's flying from them. Bellarmin takes it as granted, that the Seventy First Psalm (which in the vulgar Latin stands the Seventy Second) was written the last of all, very little before his Death; because it is a Prayer for Solomon, when he began to Reign. But notwithstanding that seeming Certainty, it is possible that the Psalms may have been written in the very Order they stand; and that David's Recollection upon the Occasion when it was past, and often reflecting upon the Accidents of his Life, and his several Preservations, might produce those Devotions, which are applied to those Occasions long after the Time when those Accidents fell out; as we are not bound to believe that David was as much endued with that Spirit, when he fought with, and subdued Goliath, as he was when he wrote the Hundred forty fourth Psalm, which

which Bellarmin thinks was written upon his Victory over that Giant; and then by his Argument, it should be the first of all the rest: But as it is probable that that was written upon a later Occasion, so if it were upon that, it was long after; upon the Reflection of that, which being the Foundation of his Fortune, he could never forget. But an exact Knowledge of all these Particulars, and many other Criticisms, which learned Men trouble themselves to examine and discover, that they may make the Book of Psalms as difficult to be understood as any of the other Books of the Prophets, will not advance any Man's Devotion upon the reading this Scripture, where he finds Use and Comfort only in that which is plain and easy, without any Controversy in the understanding it. And if the Book of Psalms had been generally understood to be so difficult in the understanding any Thing that is necessary, it is not probable that it would have been used as it was in the Jewish Church, for their Book of Common Prayer, and the greatest Part for their Celebration of their most constant Divine Service; nor since continued in all Christian Churches, in the same Manner, for their offering up their daily Devotions; and been so much preferred in some of them, before all other Places of Scripture, that the whole Book of Psalms is to be read over in all their Churches, once in every Month; which no other Part of Scripture is, in a much longer Time.

Our Learned Countryman Mr. Mede says, that the Book of Psalms was the Jewish Liturgy: And it is evident enough, that though Women were not permitted to speak in the Congregation, yet in the Recitation of the Psalms, they had all their Parts as well as the Men; * Young men and maidens, &c. And besides our Saviour's vouchsafing, as hath been said before, oftner to urge and apply Texts in the Psalms, than of any other part of Scripture; it was a wonderful Condescension in him, to chuse to make use of the Language of the 32d Psalm, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? rather than to cloathe his Passion in any Expressions of his own, when he was upon the Cross; and that the last Words which ever he spoke with the Voice of a Man, should be those of David's, in the 31st Psalm, Into thy hands I commend my spirit; which were most like to make Impression in the Hearts of the Jews, being parts of that Scripture they were most conversant in, and most delighted with. My very good Friend Dr. Hammond seems to think, that the Psalm or Hymn which our † Saviour and his Disciples sung together at the Institution of the Eucharist, was the Hundred and Fourteenth, and four subsequent Psalms, which was the Paschal Hymn; and that it could not be the Hymn of his own composing, in the 17th of John, because his Disciples could not have been able to have sung it with him. St. Austin says, that the Book of Psalms was Totius Ecclesiæ vox una; and it may be easily concluded from what he says, that the Psalms were sung in private Houses, and publickly among the People; that at least that part of Scripture, whatever the rest was, was in his Time translated into all Languages, and without any restraint communicated to the People. It was indeed excellently said of that devout Father, that the Psalms were composed by the Holy Spirit; Ut veluti ex communi quodam sanitatis fonte, omnes nobis ex hoc remedia propriis passionibus assumamus; that every Man may draw from thence, as out of a Fountain of Health, those Remedies which are proper and peculiar for his own Sickness and Indisposition. What is there that may not be learned out of the Psalms? The highest Proportion of Virtue; the exactest Rule of Justice; the decent Gracefulness

5 E

* Psalm. cxlviii. 12.

† Matth. xxvi. 30.

fulness of Modesty; the greatest Perfection of Wisdom; the strictest Rule of Patience; omne quicquid potest dici bonum, as he says, there is nothing that is good and worth the learning, but it is to be found there, and proceeds from thence. It was this Observation that first disposed, and then fixed my Thoughts to this Method of contemplating the Psalms, without troubling my self with enquiry into the Interpretation of difficult Places, with the Examination of Metaphors, the Variety of Translations, otherwise than that I could not be without Reflexion upon the vulgar Latin. I looked no farther into the Interpretation of the first Psalm, than to discern the great Difference and Inequality even in this World, between Honest and Upright Men, who have God and his Commandments always before their Eyes, and the Proud and Wicked, who neglect or contemn both; and between the Condition of those, who being unwarily ensnared by the Vanities or Levities of the World, have the Grace speedily to disintangle themselves from those Allurements and Temptations; and of them who are so much pleased and delighted in those Snarers, that they even tempt their Temptations, and are at ease and rest with all those Thorns in their Sides, which though they seem at first but to tickle, do insensibly wound, and by degrees pierce and prick the Soul it self. And I could, in the Second Psalm, which many will have a literal Prophecy of the Kingdom of our Saviour, devoutly and comfortably consider the Goodness of God, in protecting and supporting pious and just Kings, who put their Confidence in him, against all the seditious Strivings and Conspiracies of their own People, and the Malignity of their Neighbour Princes, without looking into the mystical and prophetick Part of it. I saw plainly throughout the whole Body of that Part of Sacred Scripture, so many Arguments of lively Comfort to raise my Spirits from the Dejection I was in, and to kindle and revive a reasonable Hope in the Hearts of that part of my Nation that underwent the same Calamity with me, as if they had been purposely written, and preserved for our Confirmation. I observed, that prosperous Wickedness, and the Triumph and Success of the worst Men, is of great Antiquity; and that it is no new thing for honest and sincere Persons, to fall under their Oppression, and upon the matter to lie at their Mercy; and that it hath been as usual for very innocent and upright Men, to bear that Affliction very heavily, and to undergo some Grief and Amazement, upon the Distribution of such different Portions to such different Affections; and then I could not but observe such a particular Care in divine Providence, to relieve and repair those Mortifications, and to subdue and suppress those insolent Spirits; that methoughts the future was so evident, that the present ought not to be submitted to without some chearfulness. I found Obloquy and Reproaches have often wounded, never killed and destroyed a good Name; but that Innocence at last hath triumphed over Scandal; and that God oftentimes repeats and sends the same Afflictions and Calamities upon the same Men, that he may repeat some signal Deliverances. In a word, I cannot conceive any Adversity that can befall us in our Fortune, any Sickness of Body, any Agony of Mind, that is not contracted by an unrepented Guilt, in which a Man cannot find Matter very natural and pregnant to administer Hope and Comfort to him, and reasonable assurance of Help, if he will apply it as he ought to do, out of this Book of Psalms; and if there be any Places in them of such difficulty that he cannot understand, it is no matter whether he doth understand them or not.



Contemplations *and* Reflexions

UPON THE

PSALMS of *D A V I D* :

Applying those Devotions to the Troubles
of this *T I M E*.

P S A L M I.

Jersey, 26 Decemb. 1647.



IT is not possible for us, whilst we live in this World, wholly to separate our selves from the Company of ill Men, or to avoid being sometimes present at ill Actions; there goes somewhat of Time, and somewhat of Understanding, to discover both ill Men, and ill Actions; and the greater our Charity is, the Discovery is so much the harder. No Man being so relumptuously wicked, as not to put on some garnish and dress of Virtue to impose upon the World; and there being much more Care and art to palliate and disguise what is ill, than to set forth and adorn what is good. It will suffice therefore, if we refrain from walking, from pleasing our selves in their Counsels, from standing still in their Ways, and from sitting, from resting in their Seats; if we be sure to do no Act that implies a Consent, especially a Consent upon deliberation, to what they do. All Sins have not an equal Influence upon all Natures; and as there are some Tempers and Constitutions not so liable to the Temptation of some Sins, without any great help of Virtue; so there is not the like Danger, and the like Infection from all Sinners. Many have been brought to a Love of Virtue sooner by the View and Conversation of very wicked Men, than it may be they would have been by the most severe Christian Precepts; Vice appearing more ugly and deformed in those Instances, than in the sharpest Descriptions which have been made

made of it. There is no Rank of wicked Men we are more carefully and solicitously to guard our selves from, and by whom we are in greater Danger to be intrapped, than the Scorners: *Scornful Men bring a City into a Snare**, says *Solomon*; he hath taken the highest Degree in the School of Wickedness, who is gotten into this Seat; *in Cathedra pestilentiae*, says the Vulgar, in the Chair of Contagion and Infection: The Scornor is always *in Cathedra*, in a Posture of Ease, to propagate Iniquity; he hath Wit and Parts to answer and avoid Objections and Arguments, and Pride and Impudence to laugh and deride those he cannot answer: † *He that reproveth a Scornor, getteth to himself Shame* that is, he loseth his Time, and hath no comfort in his Labour. The Conversation of such ought to be an Abomination to us. But, as such a bare Presence at ill Actions, or such a casual mingling with ill Men, being Incidents of Life, shall not be imputed to us as Crimes, much less shall our bare Presence at good Actions, in good Counsels, or a casual Conversation with good Men, be attributed to, or accepted from us, as a Degree of our Duty. As one Man may ride the same Way to commit a Murther which another does to relieve a Man from starving, so one Man may do the same Act, it may be an Act of Justice, an Act of Devotion, in order to his Revenge, or to his Ambition, which another does out of pure Conscience, and in order to his Salvation. It is not therefore an hypocritical Shew of Religion, a perfunctory Act of Piety, or a Conversation with pious Men, that will serve our Turn; if there be not a Habit of the Mind, and a Delight of the Soul, in Works of Piety and Virtue, evident in the industrious Practice thereof, we were better be without any Notion of it. It is that Delight, Joy and Satisfaction in Godliness, a constant adhering to our Duty, for the Love of him, which God vouchsafes to acknowledge, and will reward with that lasting Prosperity that shall never be determined; probably enough, a Prosperity in this World that shall dazzle the Eyes, and grieve the Hearts of those who thought they had undone us; or that shall be apparent in God's extraordinary Blessings upon our Posterity; whilst the Wicked, how bold soever in his Counsels, how resolute soever in his Ways, and how much at ease soever in his Success, shall, in a Moment, even whilst he is in the Seat of the Scornful, lose his Wits, and his Courage, and his Quiet, and retain no Memory of his past Pleasures, but with Horror and Desperation.

GOOD God, thou knowest we undergo these Miseries we now suffer, because we would not walk in those Counsels which were taken against thy Religion, and against thy Anointed; nor stand in those Ways which lead to thy Dishonour; not sit in those Seats, where Sacrilege, Rebellion, and all Prophaneness are advanced. Suffer us not to grow proud or weary of those Sufferings; let not what we have done, or what we do, be discredited by any Ends of Vainglory or Ambition; but as we have made thy Law the Rule of our Ways, so let us have no other Ends in walking in those Ways, but the Conscience of our Duty, and of pleasing thee. Suffer us not to be impatient, much less murmuring, that the due Season of thy Deliverance is not yet come. We know that they that persecute us, are like the Chaff, but the Chaff may lie as long as the Corn, if the Wind comes not; and nothing can scatter that Chaff from the Face of the Earth.

* Prov. xxix. 8.

† Prov. ix. 7.

Earth, but the Breath and Wind of thy Judgment, in which they are not able to stand. We wait thy Pleasure; and if thou shalt not find it fit for thy Glory to convince a most deluded People, by restoring us to our former Prosperity in this World, we are most assured we shall receive a better Recompence in thy due Season, in the World that is to come.

P S A L M II.

IF we had either Conscience to meditate and rely upon the Word and Promises of God, or Memory to make Use, and apply our own Experience of what is past, to dispose us to a due Estimate of what is to come, or Observation to weigh the present Accidents before our Eyes, it would not be possible for us to be weary of, or frightened from the Practice of our Duty, and our Love of Truth, by the Misfortunes our selves suffer, the Success of ill Men, or the Triumph of Error and Falsehood. Many a strong City hath been lost to a weak Enemy, for want of Courage in him that should defend it; and many a good Cause hath been betrayed, and for a Time oppressed, for want of Understanding and Dexterity in him that should maintain it: But Truth it self is so much in the Wardship of Almighty God, his own peculiar Honour and Interest is so much concerned in it, that if all other Means fail, he will by his own immediate Power vindicate it, and preserve it from Confusion. And therefore we need not be too much dejected, if we see Virtue and Innocence brought so low, that little less than a Miracle can preserve it; nothing can be more miraculous; (and indeed those are the only Miracles we must not look for) than that God should suffer Wickedness, or wicked Men so far to prevail, as utterly to destroy Goodness, or good Men; or so far to suppress it, that his Providence and Protection may be reasonably despaired of. Let the Rage and Fury of the People rise never so high, let their Imaginations be never so full of Jealousy, and their Murmurings of Sedition; let their Madness and their Pride be countenanced by a Union with their great Men, the Princes and Nobles; and let their Counsels in Mischiefs be never so subtly formed, and attended with all Successes imaginable, till they have broken all Bonds of human and divine Obligations, and cast off all Modesty and Reverence that should restrain them; God in his own Time, who cannot swerve from his Rules of Justice and Compassion, nor suffer those to be utterly destroyed, who have walked in the Paths and lived in the Principles he hath directed, will, when their Pride is at the fullest, and their Attempts seem crowned with Success not capable of a Revolution, even in the Minute they think themselves most secure, and by Means they most contemn, in a Moment overthrow their whole Fabrick and *Babel* which they have erected, and expose them to the Justice they have provoked, and to the Innocence they have oppressed, and make them Instruments of one anothers Confusion.

* O Lord, *Are not thine eyes upon the truth?* says the Prophet *Jeremy*: Can any Thing be lost that God's Eyes are fixed upon? † *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free;* says our Saviour himself to the *Jews* whom he had converted. *Beza* renders it,

5 F

veritas

* Jer. v. 3.

† John viii. 32.

veritas vos in libertatem vindicabit, Truth shall recover your Freedom when it is lost. If we can but preserve the Truth, lodge it in our Hearts, and be unshaken by any Temptation to part from it, God will preserve us; for when Truth suffers, he is in a manner a joint Sufferer himself with it. If nothing else can move us to a Firmness and Constancy in Innocence, how unprosperous soever it prove, methinks our Experience of the sudden and unexpected Miseries which have befallen, and do every Day attend ill Men, when they believe they are arrived at the Height of all earthly Assurance, should wonderfully work upon us. And then, if we again considered the Difference of their Sufferings; that is, the different Temper of those who are thus broken with the Rod of God's own Judgment, and of those who have been broken by the Rod of their Insolence and Uncharitableness; the Amazements, Disconsolateness and Confusion of the one, and the Cheerfulness, Alacrity and Patience of the other; we could not but conclude, there can be no Prosperity and Happiness without, or no Adversity and Affliction with a due Fear and Reverence of God, and Obedience to his Commandments.

*M*erciful Father, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to look down with Pity and Compassion upon thy Servants, who are persecuted, and driven out of their Country, by the Imaginations and Rage of a blind and seduced People; break and disappoint the Councils they have taken against Thee, and thy Anointed; and give them some Instances of thy Displeasure, that they may perceive that all their wicked Attempts are but in vain, because thou art resolved to defend thy own Cause. Open thou their Eyes and their Hearts, that they may discern that their Impiety and Prophaneness against thy Church, their Sedition and Rebellion against thy Anointed, their Animosity and Cruelty against their Brethren and Fellow Subjects, have been so many Attempts against thy Divine Majesty; that so they may look with Fear and Reverence towards thee, before thine Anger be so kindled, that nothing but their Destruction and final Ruin can extinguish it. And if their Hearts are so hardened, that thy Grace can make no Impression on them, break them in Pieces with thy own Rod, and let their Confusion prevent the Confusion of those, who with all Simplicity and Integrity of Heart have endeavoured to perform their Duty to thee.

P S A L M III.

ONE of the great Differences between a meer moral Man, and a good Christian, is, that the one depends only upon, and guides himself by the Dictates of natural Reason, the other upon, and by the natural Principles of Conscience and Religion; not that the Christian undervalues or declines Reason more than the other, but that his Reason is of a better Allay, is farther extended, and carries the Christian farther than the other does. The Hopes and Fears of the Moral Man are restrained within narrower Limits and Terminations than those of the Christian: The former, if he be overpowered with the Strength, or Number, or Authority of his Adversaries, if he be reduced to those

Streights and Difficulties, that he sees no natural way to disentangle himself from them, presently faints and sinks under the Burthen; and contrives Expedients to comply with the Power he cannot resist; and considers his Innocence as a Matter of no Moment without his Life; which (and it may be his Fortune) he thinks lawful to preserve at any Price. But the pious and godly Man, who looks upon this World but as a Passage to a better or a worse, and himself as a Probationer in it, and to go to the one or the other, as he behaves himself in this, fixes first upon the clearest Principles of Truth, which are evident to his Reason, and to his Conscience; and by and according to those, forms his Life; and by all honest Industry and Dexterity endeavours to oppose and resist and frustrate the Designs of ill Men; well knowing, that Laziness and Inactivity, and a stupid Reliance upon Providence, without using those Parts or Powers, which God hath given him for his Vindication and Defence, is not agreeable to the Duty of a Christian. If he find all the honest Opposition and Resistance he can make, proves too weak; and the Strength and Malice, and Success of his Enemies so great, that he hath no way to preserve his Estate, and his Liberty, and it may be his Life, from Injustice and Violence, but by submitting to the Fury that hath overborn him, and complying with them in particular Acts not consistent with his publick Duty, he is fast and unshaken still in his Foundations; his Conscience informs him, that what is proposed, or suggested to be done, is unlawful; and therefore his Reason tells him he must not do it, as much as it can tell him there is nothing else in his own Power to preserve him. Then he considers, since it is evident that he cannot help himself, what God's Part is, and revolves all his Promises and Engagements for the Protection, Preservation and Redemption of those, who having performed their Parts according to the Abilities he hath given them, (for a different Account must be made for different Abilities) in Simplicity of Heart, rely and depend upon his immediate Vindication and Assistance; and his Reason presently assures him, that every one of those Promises will be made good to him; and that God himself will do that which was not in his Power to do. For if my Reason tells me, I may be assured and depend, that whatsoever the King promises me shall be performed; without doubt my very Reason may more assure me, that what God hath promised, shall be accomplished. When he hath once made this Syllogism, he is chearful and confident, and acquiesces in that Confidence, and lays him down and sleeps; he is quiet and unprojecting, and even unconcerned to help himself; and believes that his being so advances his Recovery; and that God would have no Partnership in his own proper Work. He remembers the Example of King *David*, that when a most unnatural Rebellion was raised against him, and all the Strength of his Kingdom possessed by those Rebels; when his Counsellor revolted from him, discovered his Secrets, and combined with his Enemies; when his Uprightness, Sincerity and Integrity, was traduced and reproached, and the Hearts of his People were stolen from him; when his Retirement from that Storm, was attended with Obloquies, Revilings, and bitter cursing of his Person, and with Treachery amongst those who seemed to run his Fortune; so that to human Understanding, never any Condition of a King appeared more deplorable or desperate; he relied still on God, and waited his Leisure and Influence, to divide those Councils, which his own Policy could not frustrate; and

and to recal and reform those Hearts, which his own Innocence could not retain; and by a full Conviction of their Error, to force them from those who had stoln them from the King; and resting quiet under this Expectation and Confidence, he quickly found, that he was sustained by a Strength that could not fail him; and that the Number of his Enemies did but increase their own Confusion. And when he hath recollected this, and many other such Examples, possibly some of his own Experience and Observation, he reposes himself in a Posture of Patience and Contentedness; and concludes, that how hopeless soever his Estate seems, if he continue innocent, God will, as soon as it is fit, restore him to his Right; and not only weaken his Enemies, that they shall be able to do him no more Hurt, but even humble them to Sorrow and Shame, for the Injury they have done.

G Racious Father, infuse into our Hearts a true Sense and Consideration, that all our Security depends on thy Protection, of which neither the Power or Malice of our Enemies can deprive us, if we repose our Trust and Confidence in thee: And therefore, suffer us not to be inclined or misled by any worldly Designs or Stratagems, to redeem our selves from any Sufferings which we have undergone, in discharge of our Duties to thee and the King. Be thou our Shield, our Comforter and Supporter; and by being so, convince and convert those, who out of the Pride and Insolence of their Success, are even ready to conclude, that there is no help for us in thy Name; or as blasphemously, that thou likest and approvest what they do, because thou dost not help us. Remember how near the Sufferings of thy Servant the King are parallel to those which thy other Servant underwent when he composed this Psalm; and how entire his Majesty's Confidence and Dependance is on thee: And therefore (good God) make his Deliverance and Restoration parallel to the other too, that the World may see that Salvation belongeth only to the Lord, and that thy Blessing is peculiar to thy People.

P S A L M IV.

W E use not to go with that Confidence and Boldness to any for Favours and Courtesies, as to those from whom we have formerly received Civilities and Kindnesses: He that hath once done me a good Turn, hath given me an Obligation that he will do me more; and the less I have deserved from him, the stronger Obligation I have upon him, by what he hath already done. All Men naturally inclining, *tueri opus*, to justify and publish the Good they have done, by taking all occasions to improve it; insomuch as every Man's Observation can supply him with many Instances of Men, who can give no other reason for their continual Kindness to some Men, than because they have been kind to them; so unwilling they are to decline an Election of their own, albeit they find they were at first mistaken in their Choice; and that the Persons are not so worthy, as at first they conceived them to be. God himself observes much of the same Method, and is well content with that Boldness and Confidence in us; and allows us, from his Blessings upon us, to raise and create a Title to our selves to new Favours

vours and Deliverances. If we can once say, that he hath taken so much notice of us, as to have relieved us out of any Calamity, or supported us in one; that when the Power and Oppression of our Enemies hath reduced us into great Streights, he hath once enlarged those Streights, by shewing us a Way out of them, or by contracting or restraining our Passions and Affections, so that we have room enough even in those Streights; if we can say he hath at any time heard our Prayer, and granted our Request; we have not only a Title to go to him in any new Distress, but an Argument and Claim, to make to him, that he assist, and support, and relieve us, because he hath done so before; and God is pleased to vouchsafe not to be able to answer that Argument, or to avoid that Claim, because he hath indeed given us a Right to his Protection, by having once protected us, provided that we repair to him for his Help, and present that Token to his remembrance; but if we forget that, he forgets it too, and we are put then to find a new Title: The very Remembrance of a Favour is a kind of Gratitude; and if God finds we do not remember what he hath done for us, he will not trust our Memory with new Obligations.

When the pious and the faithful Man hath raised himself to this Confidence and Argumentation, he is no more disturbed and shaken with the Conspiracies and Combinations of ill Men, be their Interest and their Power what it will; he cares not how deaf they are to his Expostulations, and unmerciful to his Complaints. Let them be delighted and puffed up with their own Vanities, and condemn all those they have oppressed, he retains the Courage still to reprehend them in their highest Successes; and by the Authority of a good Conscience, appears as much superior to his Enemies, as he hath a Title above them to God's Protection; from the Confidence wherein he finds a more real and substantial Joy of Heart, than the worldly Man can find from the Access and Accumulation of all earthly Additions and Felicities. For as the Pain and Sickness of the Body is nothing comparable to the Agony and Torment of the Mind, so no Health or Prosperity administers the least Comfort and Satisfaction to the Mind, in comparison of the Peace, and Joy, and Quiet, that it finds and receives from the doing any good Actions, by which it can reasonably promise it self the Favour and Protection of God. And it may be, if this blessed Temper and Constitution of the Mind of Man were duly weighed and considered, it would be a greater Promotion and Vindication of Justice and Innocence, than any Deliberation we can bring our loose and licentious Thoughts to. That the Mind and Conscience may be so subdued and hardened by a Frequency and Custom of Sinning, that it feels no check or compulsion at ill Actions, is too evident and apparent; but that it can be so corrupted, as not to feel some delight in well-doing, is not so clear: And truly I am persuaded, that the worst Man, (if he had Virtue enough to take notice of the Impression) when some accidental Good falls from him, as there is no Man so ill but he does well sometimes, finds a different Peace and Tranquillity of Mind about him, resulting from that Good, than from the most prosperous Wickedness which can befall him; so great a Prerogative hath Uprightness and Integrity, in spite of any Depression.

GRacious and merciful God, though the heavy Hand of thy Judgment is now upon us; and that we are reduced into great Streights and Extremities, from whence no Reason or Power of our own can possibly redeem us; yet thou hast hitherto wonderfully preserved and protected us; thou hast made the Wickedness of those who have persecuted us so apparent to the World, that many who have been misled by them, are even sorry for the Assistance they have given against us, and acknowledge our Integrity, whom they had traduced. Since thou hast done thus much, O Lord, and because thou hast done thus much, hear our Prayer now again, and finish thy own Work; make all the World to know, that we having put our whole Trust, and depended upon thee; and having already received so many Instances of thy fatherly Care and Protection, shall not be utterly destroyed by those who would turn our Glory into Shame, and who are even ready in our Ruin, to reproach thy Providence and Almighty Power. Infuse into our Hearts such an Assurance and Confidence of thy Favour, that all Men may see a Mark of thy especial Favour in our Patience, till they do see the Evidence of it in our Deliverance.

P S A L M V.

TH E R E is no Sin more inconsistent with the Duty of a Christian than Presumption, and an Opinion that his own Wit, and Reason, and Observation, hath produced that Integrity and Innocence, which hath kept him from being corrupted by the Errors and Wickedness of other Men; or that because he hath hitherto continued innocent, he shall be able to preserve himself from those Allurements and Temptations he hath already resisted. They who are transported with this Confidence, usually recover the Time they have lost, in doing well; and overtake and outrun those, who have been engaged in Wickedness before them. So we frequently see Men, who have seem'd to hold a steady Course of Virtue, on a sudden, by an odious Relapse and Apostacy, to submit to a Partnership in that very Vice, which they have been thought most averse from; except it cannot properly be called an Apostacy, which is only a Declension from a Practice or Profession, which had never any Contract from the Heart and Conscience; and such an Innocence there may be, without any great Inclination to continue innocent. I may affect Sobriety with dislike only of the Company that is dissolute, and yet be never the more in Love with Temperance: And I may decline Rebellion, upon dislike of the Design, or the Conductors, and yet be never the better Subject; and then, when those Circumstances are altered, I am as forward in ill as the worst. But he that out of Knowledge, and by the Impulsion of his Conscience, refrains from a popular and prosperous Wickedness, and chuses rather to undergo an Affliction, or Calamity, than to infringe his Duty, does acknowledge that Election to proceed from the Grace and Favour of God; and is no longer confident that he shall retain that State of Integrity, than God will vouchsafe to support him with his immediate Protection: And therefore no Man is so often at his Prayers, so apprehensive and conscious of his own Weakness, and so importunate in imploring God's Help, as he who hath most Strength,

Strength, and hath resisted most Temptations. He knows the Devil hath not a cunninger Bait to catch him by, than a Confidence in himself, and a Pride in what he hath done, or suffered well; and therefore, what Courage soever he expresses towards Men, he approaches God in frequent Prayer, with all the Fear imaginable, and by that Fear propagates his Courage; and no otherwise accounts himself provided to encounter with his Enemies, than as he is fortified by Prayer. Let the Folly of the Wicked be never so gross, they will have Wit enough to impose upon me; and let their Dissimulation and Cruelty, and Craft and Perfidiousness be never so apparent, they will have Credit enough to destroy me, if I be not guided and directed by that Providence which cannot be deluded; and that Providence will not be propitious to me, if it be not awakened by the Voice of my Prayer. If I have resisted Temptations longer than other Men; if I have preserved my Conscience, and my Duty to God and the King, when many others have been persuaded, and terrified, and frightened out of theirs; if I have born Afflictions better, and thereby made them less than other Men; a Declension from this State is a greater Downfall, than theirs who have yielded, or been hurried away by the first Torrent; and therefore I must with the more importunity call, and cry, and pray to him, who hath given me the Innocence I have, that he will take it into his own care; that he will watch and direct my Footsteps into his Path; and by his gracious Influence encompass and defend me against all Assaults and Machinations: And then they who persecute me shall find, that all their Hypocrisy, and Craft, and Cruelty, is mere Foolishness in his Sight, and that they can hurt no body whom he hath taken into his Protection.

Merciful God, bow down, we beseech thee, thine Ears to the sad Cry of our Prayer, which we continually pour out before thee; thou knowest we are persecuted and encompassed by a lying and perfidious Generation, who by their Insinuation and Flattery, would intice us from our Devotion to thee, and from our Allegiance to thy Servant the King: And because those Insinuations, and that Flattery hath not prevailed over us, they have, by Calumnies and Lies, traduced our good Name and Reputation, and endeavoured to bury our Fame in the Bottomless Pit of their Reproaches. We acknowledge, O Lord, that our Courage and Conscience to discern their Falshood, and condemn their Power, proceeds only from thy Goodness to us; and if thou withdrawest thy Hand from us, we shall not only fall into the Net which they have laid for us, but run along with them in their own Paths of Wickedness. For the Multitude of thy Mercies therefore, O Lord, our King and our God, support and direct our Goings, that we tread not out of thy Way; disappoint their Counsels, and frustrate their farther Enterprizes; and let them discern by their Conversion or Destruction, that they who take Arms against thy Anointed, and persecute thy Children, do most immediately rebel against thee, and neglect and condemn thy Power.

P S A L M VI.

THE wrath (or Anger) of a King, is as messengers of death, says Solomon; and the Anger of God is no less than present Death and Destruction: *Persecute and destroy them in anger*, says the Spirit of God in the *Lamentations*. But as he is an ill Courtier that interprets every Reprehension from the King, every Refusal of a Suit, or his not being preferred, to proceed from the King's Anger: So he is a worse Christian, who imputes every Cross, or every Affliction he suffers, to the Anger and Displeasure of God. We are all God's Children, and Reproof and Correction is as due to Children from their Parents, as Nourishment, they cannot prosper without it: Crosses and Afflictions are God's Reprehensions and Chastisements, which we cannot be without, if we are his Children: Therefore the pious and godly Man does not, must not pray that all Things may succeed according to his own Wish, that he may know nothing but Prosperity in this World, meet with no Interruptions in his Fortune; all that he deprecates is, that those Afflictions which he must pass through; that Adversity with which he must be exercised, may not fall upon him out of God's Anger, and that his Displeasure may not pursue him beyond that Adversity; that his Suffering in this World, may expiate for all Sufferings in the next. When he hath assured himself thus far of God's negative Favour, that he is not angry, as he may quickly do; for whoever really and heartily fears God's Anger, is sure never to feel it; there is no such infallible Sign of God's being angry with us, as when we do not fear it, or apprehend it so much, as to deprecate it, to pray against it; he easily recovers the Courage to turn that deprecatory Prayer into a postulatory one; to ask somewhat affirmatively, that may be an Earnest of his Protection; and that others may see the Evidence of his Favour, as well as himself feel an Assurance that he is capable of it: As the knowing that the King hath no Prejudice to us is the first, and a good Approach to ask a Suit or a Boon from him.

There is that Analogy between the Body and the Mind of Man between his Spiritual and Temporal State, whether we consider the Temporal State, with Reference to our Health, or to our Prosperity; that as the Mind is not so easily informed or reformed as by the Sickness of the Body, or by the Crosses of the World, so the Peace and Quiet, and Tranquility of it, it may be, cannot be better, that is, by a better Method provided for, than by taking such a regular Care for the Strength of our Mind, as we do for the Health of our Body; a Care for the refreshing and delighting our Mind, in Proportion to that we take for improving our Fortune, and by taking such a kind of Survey of our Thoughts and Actions, in order to the Happiness of our Souls in the next World, as we do to establishing our Condition in this. If when we find our Health impaired by the Prevalence of any malignant Humour in our Body, and our Strength decayed by an Extension or Contraction of our Sinews, or by breaking the main Props and Supporters of the Body, our Bones, we were as sensible, that the yielding to every corrupt Affection and Passion, is as great a vitiating and weakening of the Mind, and consequent

quently as dangerous to the Soul; that no Dislocation or Fracture of a Bone is a sharper Pain, or more sensible Weakness to the Body, than the preceding or falling from a Principle in Conscience, which begets and nourishes a just Confidence in God's Favour, is to the Soul; we should be as forward and as solicitous to call upon the Spiritual Physician for Assistance and Help in the one, as we are upon the Corporal one in the other; and should be as willing and as diligent to observe his Prescriptions and Directions, as the others. If when we find our Sleeps disturbed, and our Rest disquieted, upon the Power and Malice and Oppression of our Enemies, or upon the Loss of our Friends; and upon the Anxiety and Grief of that, without any ill Temperature in our own Bodies, or any visible Discomposure in our own Affairs before those Accidents, out of the very Agony of our Spirits, our Health and our Beauty, our Countenance and our Constitution insensibly alter to Pale-ness and Diseases; we would consider, that that Grief is nothing to the Vexation the Soul endures from the Guilt of any enormous Crime and Transgression; and that the Soul is infinitely more sensible of Vexation and Pain above the Body, than the Eye is more sensible of Pain above the brawn of the Arm, or any other fleshy Part. If we would think, that as the dead Body in the Grave is void of all Beauty, and Motion, and Memory, so the dead Soul in Sin, in the Grave of a stubborn, pertinacious, preconsidered Sin, is without any Likeness or Similitude to God, in whose Image it was created; without any Memory of the Favours it hath received from him, and without any Inclination to expect any future by him; but then that it is in a much worse Condition than the Body; for that, though it hath lost its Beauty, and its Comeliness, and instead thereof, is nothing but Corruption and Rottenness, yet it will shortly lose its very Rottenness and Corruption too; as it hath no Beauty, so it hath no Being, and his Friends or Enemies shall no more know him, or where he is, than they can find the Dust that the Wind blew yesterday away before them; nay, it may be, that very Dust that made thy last Journey unpleasant to thee, that Dust which is now in thy Eyes, and hinders thee from beholding some delightful Object, is the Dust of that Man (thou can'st not know that it is not) whom thy Rebellion exposed to Murther, or thy Uncharitableness suffered to be starved; and then even this dead Body, without any Guilt, takes some Revenge upon thy Pride and Cruelty: Whereas the dead Soul, the Soul stupified in a Lethargy of Sinning, hath still so much Life left, as to be sensible of the Want of it; and after an Ages suffering more Torment than the Body can endure half a Minute, retains still the same Essence, and Capacity of suffering more, and the same sharp Sense of what it suffers, as it had in the first Article it first entertained that Affection to Sin: I say, if we would entertain these Contemplations, watch the Health of our Minds as we do the Health of our Bodies; and any Declension towards Wickedness in the one, as towards Weakness in the other; it would not be possible for us to have a confirmed Habit of ill, and to be so long without Apprehension of God's Anger, till he takes from us any Fear of it: But we should recover such a virtuous Temper and Constancy of Mind, that we should subdue all unruly Inclinations, and even suppress the first Thoughts and Temptations to Wickedness.

*M*erciful Father, who beholdest our Miseries, and knowest our Weakness; and that we are reduced to such a Feebleness by our Sufferings, and to such a Faintness out of the Sense that they are not yet drawn towards a Period, that without thy extraordinary Help, we are not able to bear the Weight of our present Burden, or the Fear of what may befall us: How long, O Lord, wilt thou let us lie under this insupportable Oppression? How long shall our Enemies triumph in our Griefs, and in our Tears; in our Banishment, and in our Poverty? How long shall their Schisms, and their Heresies, and their Blasphemies, triumph over thy Church; and their Insolence, and Treason, and Rebellion, over thy dear, and faithful, and conscientious Servant the King? How long shall his Soul be vexed and disquieted with their Impieties against thee; and his precious Life be in danger of their bloody, and perfidious, and merciless Arms? Let him find, good God, and let us all find, that thou hast heard our Supplications; and that though thy Rebukes and Chastisements are upon us for our many Sins, yet that they proceed from thy Fatherly Care and Tenderneſs for our Reformation, and not out of thy Anger and hot Displeasure for our Destruction: Raise us from this Death of Confusion, and out of this Grave of Desolation, that thy Name may be magnified throughout the World, by the Greatness of our Deliverance. Convert and instruct our Enemies, that they may be conscious to themselves of their Impiety against thee; of their Disloyalty against their Sovereign; of their Uncharitableness and Cruelty against their Brethren. Infuse into their Hearts such a Modesty, that they may be ashamed of their Unreasonableness and Insolence; and such a Tenderneſs, that they may be grieved and afflicted, for the Grief and Affliction which they have brought upon other Men. And being thus returned to thee, let us return to them, and be all more delighted with a Reconciliation to thee, and to one another, than we have been with any good Successes against them, or than we could be with their Ruin and Destruction.

P S A L M VII.

*T*HERE is not a greater Difference between the Pious and the wicked Man in point of Justice, than there is in point of Patience: No Man bears Wrong so well, as he that does none; and no Man so impatient of Injuries, as he that is most injurious. It is a common Saying, and as untrue as common, If I had deserved the Injury it would not trouble me; when in truth, it does only not trouble me, because I have not deserved it: And it is a sure Sign that I have deserved it, if I am immoderately troubled at it; Guilt being that which administers the Vexation. If the covetous Man be accused of Uncharitableness or Oppression; or the unjust Man of Rapine or Fraud, he is troubled and disquieted, and meditates Revenge for the Reproach, without thinking of Reformation of the Crimes. So far are we from justifying the Ill we do to our own Consciences, upon which we impose by the Custom of doing it, that we would have the World believe that we abhor those

Sins which we hug most in our Bosoms; and therefore we are implacable towards those who discover our Corruption. But the innocent Man is unmoved, if any Scandals or Calumnies are cast upon him: First, he considers and examines whether they are so utterly and absolutely groundless, that no Carriage and Infirmary of his hath given some just Rise and Occasion for those Aspersions; and so compounds an Antidote out of those Poysons, makes his Enemies his Counsellors, and even breaks their Hearts with his own Reformation. The best Christian needs not be ashamed of learning Justice and Conscience, from that Example of Philip of Macedon, who, when some of his Flatterers complained that Nicanor spoke very ill of him, and persuaded him therefore to send for him, and to punish him: Yea, (says he) but were it not better to examine whether the Fault be not in our selves, for Nicanor is one of the wisest and honestest Men of Macedon. Which is not only a good Temper when we have the Misfortune to be ill thought of, or ill spoken of, by Persons of good Fame and Reputation, how innocent soever we are; but even when we are traduced unjustly by the mere Malice of envenomed Enemies; for that Malice commonly finds out some Infirmary or Weakness in us, upon which Men found and make the Ground-work for the Structure their Injustice and Hatred intends to raise, and then we may happily discover some Weakness or Spot in our Nature, fit to be taken Care of. If upon our Disquisition, we are sure those Calumnies are simply unjust and unreasonable, both in their Premises and Conclusions; that we have nothing to contend with but Wickedness and Malice; what greater Joy and Triumph can we have in our own Bosoms, and what greater Cause of a holy Pride, and Acknowledgment of God's Goodness, than that our open professed Enemies have not been able to reproach us with any Thing we have indeed said or done, but are forced to traduce us with Shifts and Lies, and Imaginations of their own? And then let those Scandals appear never so dangerous to our Fame, or to our Fortune, never so directly levelled against our Life, we are sure, or we may be sure, that God himself, in his own Justice, will raise a Defence for us, and when we are at lowest, make our Integrity appear, and be manifest, either by the Conversion of our Enemies, or by their Destruction; that when we are even overwhelmed with the Malice and Power of our Enemies, intangled within the Snares they have laid for us, and at the brink of Ruin, that he will then give us his Hand to support us; and in an Instant, when they are most secure, involve our cruel Persecutors into those very Snares and Toils, and Pits they have prepared for our Destruction: *Whoso diggeth a Pit shall fall therein, and he that setteth a Trap shall be taken therein: He that worketh Mischief it shall fall upon him, and he shall not know whence it cometh,* says the Son of Syrach.

Scarce any Age of the World hath yielded more Examples of this kind of God's Judgments, and yet the Guilty are not startled with them, nor the Innocent enough confirmed: How many who have been the chief Authors and Contrivers of Misery and Ruin, and Shame to other Men, have we known by the same Artifices brought to the same Misery and Ruin, and Shame, which they prepared for others, and even by those to whose Use, and for whose Advantage they were the Ministers of Mischief to others? How many have lost their Lives in that Rebellion which they kindled out of their Ambition? Nay, how many have lost their Heads upon that very Scaffold, which they caused

to be erected for the Execution of those they hated? To how many may that Story of *Jason* * be applied (which though it be not Canonical Scripture, is yet Canonical History) *Who slew his own Citizens without Mercy*; not considering, that to get the Day of them of his own Nation, would be a most unhappy Day for him; *who afterwards fleeing from City to City, was pursued of all Men, hated as a Forsaker of the Laws, and being had in Abomination, as an open Enemy of his Country and Countrymen, was cast out into Egypt.* Thus he that had driven many out of their Country, perished in a strange Land; and he that had cast out many unburied, had none to mourn for him, nor any solemn Funeral at all, nor Sepulchre with his Fathers. Some have undergone this Fate literally, as if it had not been a History, but a Prophecy; and many have passed a great Part of it, and have Reason every Day to expect the Consummation of the whole. If we did not take Pains to forget all the Instances of these immediate Judgments of God in the Course of our Lives, and within our own Observation; or rather (which is worse than forgetting them) if we did not in our Vanity, our Pride, our Insolency and Presumption, remember them only in Triumph over the Misfortunes of those who have suffered under them, as God's Judgments upon them, and not as Mercies towards us; without making any Use of them in our Practice, either to startle us from any Sin which is agreeable to our Appetite or Affections, or to confirm us in our Duties, though we perform it with Loss and Danger; it were not possible but that Experience and Contemplation upon it, would stir up another kind of Spirit and Vigor in us, to consider the Justice and Goodness of God, and more to apprehend his Anger, than the Rage of our Enemies; we should more revolve the past Actions and Accidents of our own Lives, in which it may be we may remember some Allarms of the same Judgments, (though he hath yet vouchsafed not to publish them to the World in so legible Characters) when many of our Actions, Endeavours and Councils, right and justifiable in themselves, have therefore been checked, and proved unprosperous, because our Ends have not been direct, and more out of Design to satisfy our own Vanity or Ambition, or Revenge upon those who have been faulty, than out of the Conscience of our Duty, or Desire to reduce and reform their Errors; and so we have brought upon our selves the same Shame and Reproach, and Sorrow, which we purposed for other Men. These are God's own Instruments, and his own Arrows, which his Quiver is always full of; and with which he is always ready to relieve and rescue those who suffer for him, and for his Truth; and to restrain, and humble, and expose those who grow proud and pertinacious upon the Successes and Prosperity of their Wickedness.

GOOD God, thou knowest we are unjustly and maliciously Reproached and Slandered with being reported to be disaffected to the true Religion, and to the true Worship of thee; to be Enemies to the Peace, and Liberty, and Security of our Country; to be Promoters of Popery, and Introducers of Tyranny: If we are guilty of these heavy Charges, we know thou wilt, and justly art bound to suffer our Enemies fully to prevail over us, and that our Shame, and Dishonour, and Confusion, be as publick and as notorious as our Crimes. But, O Lord God, if this be not true; if we have with

I

* 2 Macc. v.

the utmost Faculties of our Souls, studied and laboured the Preservation of thy true Religion, and the Decency of thy Worship: If we have, according to the Understanding and Grace which thou hast given us, heartily abhorred all Prophaneness, Superstition and Sacrilege; and according to our Weakness, conformed our selves to those Christian Precepts and Injunctions which thou hast given us in thy Scriptures: If we have in all Duty and Integrity, desired to perform our Duty to our Countrey, in the Discharge of that Allegiance, which by thy Command is due to our Sovereign Lord the King; and to preserve his Rights and Power due to him by the Frame and Constitution, and Laws of the Kingdom: If we have been truly tender of the just Liberties of that People, as of our own dearest Interest in this World, and as much abhorred all Thoughts of Tyranny as of Anarchy; we must appeal to thy Justice, and rely upon thy Power, that thy Anger shall be higher, and above their Rage. Accept, we beseech thee, our Zeal to perform this Part of our Duty, in Satisfaction for the many Sins and Offences we have committed in the other Actions of our Life, and even our Errors and Infirmities in this very Act of our Duty; and let those heavy Sufferings we have already undergone by the Injustice of cruel Men, expiate for those Sufferings we should justly undergo for our Transgressions against thee. The Pit, O Lord, is digged, and we are ready to be thrown into it, rescue us by some Instruments of thine; let fly thy own Arrows, and whet thy own Sword, that if our Enemies refuse to turn to thee, to hearken to thy Call, let the Violence by which they have banished us, disperse and dissolve them, and the Destruction they have appointed for us, be their own Lot and Portion; that all the World may magnify thy wonderful Justice, and we may sing Praises to thy Name.

P S A L M VIII.

WHAT is man that thou should'st magnify him, and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him? says Job. We need no other Arguments to carry up our Devotion (if our Devotion had so much Life, as to be capable of Motion) to such an Acknowledgment of God's wonderful Goodness towards us, as might keep us fixed to a just Obedience to him, than the Consideration of his extraordinary Love to us, in his very Act of Creation of us; setting aside what he hath since done for us: And if we had but the same Sense of his Kindness, as we have of the Favour of Princes or great Men, we should prosecute it, at least with the same Application and Submission as we do theirs. We are very ready and forward to acknowledge any Civility from Men who are above us; and if the King vouchsafes to take so much Notice of us, as to prefer us before those who are our Equals, and to give us any Government or Authority over them, we think (and we think well) that the Obligation is never to be forgotten; and that we are thereby obliged to a such peculiar Return of Duty and Obedience, that we can never be excused for failing in it. But in the whole Course of our Life, we scarce entertain one pious and grateful Contemplation of the unspeakable Kindness of God towards us, in the Glory and Honour

nour of our Creation; that he should prefer us before all the other Works of his Hands; and make the Strength and Vigour, and Virtue of all other Creatures, which (if it were not for that Distinction of his) were infinitely above ours, subservient to us, and give us the Dominion over them. There is not a Beast of the Field, nor Worm that creeps upon the Earth, that is not of a nobler Extraction than Man; for they were all the Production of the Earth, and consequently of the Spirit and Quintessence of it: Whereas Man was made of the Scum, the Refuse, the Dust of the Earth, that was good for nothing else; and if he had been left to himself as soon as made, as the rest were, he must have been a Prey to them; there being scarce a Beast that is not able to oppress or avoid him, if God had not shed a Beam of his own Majesty in his Countenance, and thereby made all other Things submit to him, and suffer themselves to be governed and disposed by him, as the Substitute of God himself.

We are apt enough to set a great Price and Value upon our selves, when the so doing may carry us farther from God; to extol and magnify the Shape, and Beauty, and Comeliness that God hath given us, when, thereby we may reproach and triumph over the Deformity of a Neighbour, and it may be, value that Comeliness, especially as it causeth us to be preferred before the other; to be proud of every Faculty, or Quality, or Title, which in common Opinion doth distinguish us from other Men, it may be, more deserving and meritorious than our selves, and which may give us some Pretence or Opportunity to affront, disquiet, or oppress them. But of that primitive, and inherent Privilege in our Nature; of that transcendent Beauty, which would justify a kind of devout Pride and Estimation of our selves, the Image of God in us, in our reasonable Souls, the Lustre whereof is that only which draws the Submission and Reverence of all other Creatures towards us; we make no account, and value our selves only above other Creatures, for those Abilities which rather make us inferior to them.

From this want of a due Estimation of the Good-will of God, in his first Act of our Creation, proceeds our Negligence and Stupidity in the Acknowledgment of his second wonderful Work in our Redemption; in his Indulgence to us to that Degree, that he sent his own Son to assume that very Nature he first created for us, and after we had so far spoiled and defaced it, that by no other Means it could be preserved and restored, and thereby again made it superior to that Enemy, who would else have prevailed over us: And we cannot better raise our selves to a thankful, and dutiful valuation of that, than by the devout Consideration of his first Grace and Goodness; and we would then believe, that as his Kindness hath been extraordinary, so his Severity and Rigor will be as notable against those who have neglected and defaced that precious Image of his, by a corrupt and wicked Life, which was so wonderfully made, supplied, and repaired by himself.

Merciful Father, who first madest Man after thy own Image, and then madest thine only begotten Son take both that Image and Nature upon him; we most humbly beseech thee, kindle in our Hearts a lively Sense of that thy unspeakable Compassion, and that we may look upon our selves as Vessels so precious by thy Election, that we may never entertain any polluted Inclinations or Thoughts, which may

may make us unworthy of thy Love and Protection, but that thou mayst continue us in thy Care to our Lives end.

P S A L M IX.

Madrid, 13th February, 1650.

Gratitudo is a necessary Duty in a good Christian, as well as in a good Man: And as amongst Men, an Ingenuity and Acknowledgment of past Favours and Obligations, is the best Art to continue the Affections of those towards us, to whom we have been beholden; so God is pleased with those Addresses too, and never hears our Prayers so well for future Blessings, as when they consist of Praises for those he hath bestowed already. If he hath at any time vouchsafed any notable Deliverance to us, or relieved us out of any signal Distress; if he hath disappointed or discountenanced our Enemies in their Stratagems or Attempts against us, the particular Remembrance and Enumeration of those Blessings is the best Preamble to our Prayers, and the best Method we can use in new Addresses to him. And as this Method is very acceptable to him, as it is an evidence of an humble, and a modest, and a grateful Heart; so it is very useful and comfortable to our selves, in order to preserving a Steadiness, and Confidence, and Constancy in our Devotion towards him, and driving away any sad and melancholick Apprehensions and Distrust of his Goodness and Favour towards us, when we labour under the Weight of any great Affliction. If we did enough remember and consider what God hath already done for us, we could not almost doubt but he will do any thing else for us that we can ask from him; and if we did frequently enough present to our Memory, the Deliverances he hath already vouchsafed to us, we should with Modesty enough be almost confident, that he will not totally give us over to any new Distress and Calamity. We need little but our own Observation, the remembring what we have seen with our own Eyes, that God hath done to our selves, and to other Men, to make us very good Men, and very good Christians, if we would exercise our selves in that Observation as we should. Are we oppressed, imprisoned, banished, for performing our Duties, and preserving the Innocence of a good Conscience? And do those that persecute us prosper, and improve their Interest and Power for the doing more Mischief? If we did consider how soon this Injustice of theirs, and this Innocence of ours shall come to be determined and judged before him, who is so much a Party, that he hath promised to maintain and defend us if we are innocent; and if we did then call to our Memory the extraordinary Judgments which we have seen fall upon the principal Contrivers, and the most powerful Champions of Oppression and Injustice, and how their Memories are almost already perished with them; we would not envy the present Advantage they have over us, nor be the more out of Love with our Innocence and Integrity, because it hath exposed us to some Distresses. Have our unmerciful and cruel Enemies fortified and secured their own Greatness, by taking away the Lives of those whose Opposition and Power they most feared, and by pouring out the Blood of those upon whom we principally relied and depended? If we did consider how infallibly God Almighty will make Inquisition for Blood, and how severe

he will be in that Inquisition; and did revolve in our Memories, the strange prodigious Examples we have seen of those Men who have been prodigal of the Blood of others, how unexpectedly their own have issued: We could not believe, that a Stock raised by such Traffick will long hold out; or a Building raised upon such a Foundation, and cemented with such Mortar, can last and stand long; but that the Blood they have so wantonly spilt, and inhumanly drank, will have more Power and Strength to frustrate their Counsels, and to destroy their Armies, than if it run still in those loyal Veins from which they drew and expelled it.

G Racious God, we do from the Bottom of our Hearts glorify thy holy Name, for those many Deliverances thou hast vouchsafed to us: We have no other Refuge but thee, nor any other Comfort to support us in this great Calamity and Affliction, but that thou hast never utterly forsaken them that seek thee. Teach us, O merciful Father, to seek thee with that Devotion, and Humility, and Importunity, and yet with that Patience and Submission that we ought; and then let us find that thou hast not forsaken us, by some Instance of Favour and Kindness to us in these our intolerable Distresses. Vouchsafe to make Inquisition for the precious Blood of so many of thy faithful Servants, who have been butchered by the Enemies to thee, and to thy Religion, and to thy Anointed. Since the Pride of those thy Enemies will not know thee, by thy frequent Rebukes which thou hast given them; since they will not know thee by thy Precepts, nor by thy Promises; make thy self known to them by thy Judgment, and by the Execution of that thy Judgment; and redeem us at last from their cruel Tyranny, that we may sing Praises to thy Name, O thou most High. Amen.

PSALM X.

THE boldest and most accustomed Thief durst not commit a Theft, and the most revengeful and most bloody Person durst not commit a Murther, if he saw the Judge looking upon him, ready to pronounce the Sentence of Death, and the Officer of Justice ready to execute that Sentence, as soon as he should commit that Offence: but they first flatter themselves with concluding that the Ill they do shall not be known, or not sufficiently proved; and if it be, that Means will be found to elude, or corrupt, or incline the Judge at least, that an Act of Mercy and Pardon will prevent the Execution. It is so with the boldest and proudest Sinner too. If we did not use some Industry and Art to make our selves worse than we are, and by Discourse, and kind of Logick, corrupt and impose upon, and pervert the Simplicity of our own Nature, and thereby suppress and extinguish the good Motions or Suggestions, the Virtue or the Fear of it inculcates into us, at our first Entrance into any notorious Sin, by making our selves believe, that this or that Sin may be committed by us, without any notice taken, and consequently without any prejudice to us: If the unjust and uncharitable Man did really believe and consider, that Almighty God does not only see and behold, and look upon every unjust and uncharitable

Act of his, by which he grieves and oppresses his Neighbour, but discerns every uncharitable and corrupt Thought and Purpose that ushers him on to that Act; and that at the Instant he puts those corrupt Thoughts in Execution, (if he be so merciful as to pardon the Thoughts and Purposes themselves) God will condemn him to the Pains of Hell-fire; (and whoever does enough believe that there is a God, must believe the other too:) If the rebellious, cruel, blood-thirsty Man did in truth think, that God's Eye is not only upon him when he lifts up his Hand against his lawful Sovereign, and when he bathes his Hands in the Blood of those who are loyal to him; but that he marks and observes every proud Thought of himself, every ambitious Thought for himself, and every undutiful and irreverent Thought of his Prince, which proceed and ingender, and bring forth his wicked Resolution; and that his executing that Resolution is God's Judgment upon those wicked Thoughts, that he may be irreparably confounded and damned for both: Neither the one or the other would have the Courage and the Confidence to be unjust or rebellious. But we first indulge our Appetite and our Passion; please our selves with the Profit of our Uncharitableness, with the Power of our Ambition, and with the Pleasure of our Revenge and Cruelty; and having thus put God out of our own Thoughts, utterly forgot him, we persuade our selves that he hath forgotten us too, considers not, takes no notice of what we do, and under that foolish Security prosecute our Unrighteousness: *For while we lived and committed Iniquity, we considered not, that we should begin to suffer for it after Death,* says the Book of † *Esdras*; if we had considered the one, we would not have committed the other. And in truth, this horrible Negligence and Incogitance is no other, or ends in no other than direct Atheism. Whilst our Hearts are set upon Wickedness, whilst with Deliberation and Design we pursue and indulge any one beloved Bosom Sin, let our specious Pretences to Piety and Religion be what they will, we are Atheists, and our Hypocrisy improves our Atheism. It is not possible that God can be out of our Thoughts, till we have full and digested Thoughts that there is no God; there being no Man alive who contemns Hell-fire, but he who for the present believes there is no such thing. Therefore we see no Man so soon and so irreparably miserable, as the proudest and the boldest Sinner; as that Man, who hath oftenest said in his Heart, I shall not be moved; who hath most contemned God's Judgments, and put them farthest out of his Sight. As soon as he finds himself disappointed in any of his Conclusions; as soon as he is in Adversity, which with the greatest Confidence he had promised himself he should never be; as soon as he discerns that God hath not forgotten him; that though, for his better Security in Sin, he would not seek after God, yet God hath vouchsafed to take the Pains to find him out; he is so totally confounded, that he knows not how to revolve the Particulars of his Sins, or to consider God under any other Notion than of a Judge, and a terrible Avenger upon wicked Men; it seeming just, that he who had given himself so full Joy and Security in his Sins by not thinking of God, and consequently that there was none, should now find and feel so complete Torment and Despair, in the only knowing and considering that there is one.

The Courage and Confidence of the good and conscientious Man, is (as all his other Ways) quite contrary to this; all his Joy and Comfort

5 K

is,

is, that God always thinks of him, sees and observes all he does, and all that others do to him: If he be persecuted by the Pride and Power of his Enemies, so that he is not able to hold up his Head, his Comfort is, that God looks upon that Persecution, and sees and observes how he bears it, and how he behaves himself in it; the honest Industry he used to prevent and resist it, and that he will not do any unlawful thing to free himself from it; and being sure that God does see and observe all this, he is as sure that he will in due time lift up his own Hand against this imperious, domineering Sinner, and frustrate all his Devices, and break all his Power, with the Strength of his own Almighty Arm. If we are innocent, and find our Innocence too weak a Guard for our Defence, and commit our selves unto him, he is so willing to be trusted in that Case, that he takes the whole Charge upon himself, and looks for nothing more from us, than a Dependence upon him, and a Confidence that he will help and deliver us.

GOOD God, who hast humbled us by a heavy, grievous, and terrible Persecution, and hast suffered us to fall under the Hand of a proud, bloody and unmerciful Enemy, who boasteth of having obtained his Hearts Desire, and in his Success hath put the Fear of thee out of his Thoughts: Stand not so far off, O Lord, in thy merciful and fatherly Protection, lest these Men think that thou wilt require no Account from them, of all their Deceit, Fraud, Mischief, Violence and Blood. Thou hast seen and beheld what they have done, and what we have suffered; thou seest our Weakness, and that we are so far from Strength to help our selves, that they who should assist us, think we have not enough left to be capable of their Help: We do commit our selves unto thee, and rely only on thy Protection; forget us not, dear Father, but requite the Mischief they have done with thy own Hand, and let our Spirits be refreshed with thy Preservation, that the afflicted and broken-hearted may glorify thy holy Name. Amen.

P S A L M XI.

THERE is nothing misleads us more, or more dangerously in this World, either in our Spiritual Journey towards that Peace of Conscience, and Confidence we desire to have in Almighty God, or in our temporal Journey towards that Happiness and Prosperity which we may honestly hope and pray for, than the mistaking Foundations; the believing this or that in Opinion or Practice to be a Foundation, which in Truth is not; or the believing that which in Truth is a Foundation, to fail, or to be destroyed, when it does neither fail, nor is destroyed; and though we are oftner corrupted by the first, than the latter Error, yet we are apt enough to fall into either, and therefore we cannot be too careful and vigilant to prevent both. The covetous Person looks upon his Estate and his Wealth, that which he is already possessed of, or that which he covets, and would have, as upon his Foundations. The proud and ambitious Man, considers his Honours and Offices, and Preferments which he hath, or hath set his Heart upon, and his Friends and Patrons, and Protectors, through whom he hath gotten, or hopes to get, as his Foundations. Every loose and licentious and
sinful

unfals Person, hath entertained some Appetite of Pleasure or Profit, which he concludes to be a Foundation. And when these Foundations are destroyed, or but in danger to be destroyed, their Estates seized, their Offices taken away, their Friends removed; when they are disappointed of any Benefit or Advantage they confidently, though unreasonably, promised themselves; their Affections and Passions presently suggest to them, that they have no more to do, but without farther Deliberation, with all the Haste and Precipitation that may be, to flee to some Mountain, to seek out and betake themselves to the Protection and Shelter of some high and powerful Person, how wicked and unjust ever he be, and how unlawful Arts and Means soever they must use and submit to, to procure that Protection; that from that Mountain they may overlook their Neighbours; and either hide themselves from, or offer Violence to that Justice and Government they ought to submit to.

The natural moral Man, who lays his Foundations deeper, and grounds his Happiness and Security upon his Reason, considers what Privilege and Liberty the Laws and Constitution of that Place where he resides, gives unto him; and thinks himself safe, whilst he does nothing but what the Laws enjoin or tolerate, and avoids all that is inhibited by the Law; and upon this Syllogism, as soon as those Laws are perverted, and that Authority which should support those Laws is oppressed, he is at his Wits End, his Foundations are destroyed, and he is presently upon a Flight to some Mountain, to a new Speculation, by what incident a Man's Obedience and Allegiance may be determined, how he may be absolved from his old Obligations, and how his Reason may be fixed upon a new Model.

But as these Mountains have neither Shadow to Refresh and Comfort, nor Shelter to Defend and Protect those who fly into them; and can at best serve but to hide and cover, and bury them, and become a part of those Judgments they would fly from; so it is no Wonder that they who build upon such Foundations are often frightened, and driven to those Places of Retreat and Refuge. The prudent and pious Christians have no such Foundations, and therefore are never driven to those Mountains; they look on their Estates, and Offices, and Honours, whilst they may enjoy them with their Innocence, as great Blessings and Rewards sent from Heaven to them; but if they must part with a part of their Integrity to keep them, they consider them no longer as Blessings, but as Temptations sent to try what Foundations they have laid to themselves; and no Enemy is more importunate to get those Foundations from them, than they are impatient to disentangle themselves from those Obligations. If they enjoy Peace and Plenty under the Security of good Laws, and under the Protection of just and pious Princes, who govern according to those Laws, they believe themselves the more obliged to be strict and precise in performing their Duties, that they may not be unworthy of those Blessings; but if those Laws be trod under Foot by Faction or Corruption, and the Guardians of those Laws, the Princes, oppressed by Treason and Rebellion; nay, if those Princes themselves oppress those Laws; their Duty and Allegiance is still the same, no Retreat or Refuge from it; that which is the Foundation of publick Peace, may not be the Foundation of private Duty, and therefore one may be destroyed and not the other: The Conscientious Man knows that no Example or Terror can excuse him from performing his Duty, and then that he may safely trust God with the rest, there is

his Foundation; and till that Confidence in God be destroyed, he need fly to no Mountain, to have no Recourse to the Power or Craft of wicked Men: But then he knows too, that as no Man can be trusted against his Will, that whatever Confidence another Man will have in me, till I accept and consent to that Confidence, he hath in Truth no Obligation of Trust upon me; and Men are not ready to take those Trusts for Strangers, but for their Friends, for those they love best; is so with God too: We cannot say we trust him, except we know he is contented to be trusted by us, except we are those he loves; the Just and Innocent Men are his Friends, and by and for whom he is contented to be trusted: So upon this joint Foundation, his Integrity towards God, and his Confidence and Trust in God, the honest and good Man relies with that full Security, that till this Foundation be destroyed, no Suggestions of Dangers from others, no Fears and Apprehensions of his own, can make him fly to any other Place for Safety. Let the Preparations of his Enemies against him be never so great and so ready, let their Arrows be upon the String, their Designs ripe, and levelled at his Fortune, or his Fame; and their Station such, that they may see, and not be seen; their Art and Cunning, and Dissimulation such, that he sees not those Designs; it may be, not suspects those to his Enemies, who are thus ready to destroy him; his Comfort is, that he in whom he puts his Trust, sees all this, his Eyes behold it, though his own are shut; and whilst he hath such a Centinel, there can be no Danger if he sleeps himself; if he repose and rest upon that Foundation.

If he be sometimes ready to fly, startled with the sudden Apprehension of the Danger he is in, with the sudden Prospect of the Power and Security of those who persecute him, and so looks towards the Mountain, thinks upon an Invention, some Stratagem to avoid or elude them, some Application to soften and allay their Malice towards him, to make their Power propitious to him; as the best Buildings may be shaken by a Storm, and yet the Foundation be very good; nay, many times it grows the stronger, and better settled for a little shaking; he is not hasty and precipitate in this Flight, all his Hope is not in his Wing; the Sight of the Mountain does not so dazzle his Eyes, as that he sees nothing else, but he is deliberate and considering in this very Flight. If his Fear suggest to him, that he puts himself in more Danger than he needs to do; that this or that Conclusion which he has made to govern himself by, is too severe, and may in such a Conjunction of Distresses be receded from; his Heart is not so set upon Flight, but that he weighs the Consequence of every yielding, and what he may be drawn to, as well as what he is to be drawn from; and if he discerns that the Violation of his Conscience and Integrity may be the Price of the Preservation of his Fortune or Life, come what will come, he retires to his old Foundation; and that being not destroyed, he gives over any other Thought of flying.

Almighty and most merciful Father, who dost vouchsafe from thy Holy Throne to behold the Calamities and Miseries we have endured, by the Wickedness and Rebellion of very Powerful, Crafty, and Prosperous Enemies, whom thou hast permitted to be Instruments of thy Wrath upon a sinful Nation; thou hast suffered us to pass a very sharp and cruel Trial, whilst many think our

dition so desperate, that they would persuade us to fly for Refuge to those whom thou hast made our Rods to chastise us; and to become even as they are, that we may enjoy what they have taken from us: But our Confidence is in thee, O Lord, that thou wilt rescue and deliver us from the Cruelty of these Men; that Confidence in thee is our Foundation, and let that Foundation never be destroyed, and then we shall never fly to any other for Succour. Let no Length or Weight of our Sufferings, no Sense of the Punishments we undergo, drive us to despair of thy Deliverance, which would be a destroying of Foundations. But since all natural Means are now too weak for our Redress, and that they have either by their Arrows destroyed, or by their Snares entrapped most of them whose Strength and Power should be applied to reduce them; let them find that thou thinkest them worthy of thy own extraordinary Judgments; and let them see how thou hast abhorred all their Ways, by being overtaken with Confusion, when they think themselves at the End of their Journey; that they may confess, that they who put not their Trust in thee, have as little Foundation of Prosperity in this World, as for Hope in that which is to come.

P S A L M XII.

THERE are those who are not ashamed to publish, that *mentiri ubi & quomodo oportet*, is amongst the excellent Faculties of wise Men; and look upon a steady adhering to Truth, a Resolution not to depart from it in Words or Actions, as want of Wit, and want of Experience in the World: As good have no Heart as not a double one; and if we have not the Skill, and Dexterity, and Artifice, to appear other Men than what we are, and to make Men think that we think otherwise than we do, we are thought to be defective in a main Part of Conversation: Whereas, in truth, if we had that Simplicity and Integrity in our Hearts which we ought to have, we should not think that more Countenance should be given to Dissimulation in Action, than to direct Falshood in Words, which is yet looked upon with some Reproach, and no doubt, there is as great a Contempt of Truth in the one as the other: A pretending to do that which I do not do, or to be that which I am not, being as much a Lie in Action, as the saying, I did that which I did not do, or I saw that which I did not see, is a Lie in Words; and there can be little said for the Defence of the one, which may not be as speciously offered, and it may be as reasonably urged for the Defence of the other. And whoever takes upon him to open a Door to this License, by prescribing Cases in which Men may decline the precise Rule of Truth, had need have great Authority, and Submission from all, that he may likewise prescribe Limits and Bounds to that License; for if in such a Case, for such a Benefit and Advantage, a Man may be allowed the Liberty to lye or dissemble, he quickly will suppose himself the proper Judge when that Benefit and Advantage may best be gotten, and to find out some other Benefit and Advantage as considerable as that, to which the Advice or Concession was first applied.

How much soever we think otherwise, *David* thought his Conversation and Living with this kind of People, amongst his signal Distresses;

in which his own Wit and Skill altogether failed him, and in which he had most need of the immediate Help and Protection of God. Amongst his open and avowed Enemies, how malicious and powerful soever, he could make some Shift sometimes to expostulate with them; and with the Clearness of his Innocence and Uprightness, put their Injustice and Fury out of Countenance; sometimes retire, and withdraw himself from their Anger, till their Passions were over; but from the Flatterers and Dissemblers he had no Shelter; from Men that would say one Thing and do another, make Profession of being his Friends, and secretly contrive and contribute to his Ruin, he knew not how to defend himself; and indeed they who think their Tongues so much their own, that they may use them as they please, and are to give no Account of their Words, need no other Weapon but their Tongue, to do Mischief enough. ** With much communication will he tempt thee, and smiling upon thee, will get out thy secrets: But cruelly he will lay up thy words, and will not spare to do thee hurt, and to put thee in Prison,* says the Son of Syrach. The flattering and dissembling Man will tell thee all he knows, and more than he knows, and buy thy Secrets at the Price of greater Secrets, till he find an Advantage to undo thee. But God, who loves Truth and Simplicity in all our Actions, as well as in all our Words, and commonly finds those who are Flatterers and Dissemblers to Men, to be Hypocrites towards him, to make wonderful Shew of Religion, and to perform none of the Obligations of Religion; nay, too frequently by their Hypocrisy towards him, and pretending much Devotion to his Service, to grow the more able to cozen and mislead, and oppress their Neighbours, and so much as in them lies, to make him a Party, or an Accessary to their Wickedness; will in his own good Time, help against these Maskers in Religion and moral Honesty, and destroy their Councils, and set such Marks and Brands upon them, expose them to that Infamy, that they shall be unexcusable who are farther imposed upon by their Flattery and Dissimulation.

ALmighty God, look down upon us, a sinful, miserable, deluded Nation, more undone by the Flattery and Dissembling of our Enemies, than by their Swords; and if they had not first prevailed over us by their flattering Lips, and double Hearts, their Swords could have had no Power over us: Thou knowest their Vanity and their Pride, and their Dissembling, and how they scoff at, and deride that Truth and Simplicity of Heart, which Men who fear thee desire to be possessed of: Hear, at least, the Sighing of us thy poor oppressed, banished Servants, and arise and help us, and set us again at Liberty in our own Country; take Vengeance on those dissembling Hearts, and flattering Tongues, that they may know that their Tongues are not their own, but that thou art Lord over them: Thou hast promised that thou wilt not utterly forsake those who put their Trust in thee, and thy Words are pure Words, and can never deceive or disappoint us; help us therefore, and preserve us, for thy own Name sake. Amen.

P S A L M

P S A L M XIII.

THERE is an Impatience, an Importunity that becomes wise Men, and good Christians, and is even an Ornament to their Wisdom and Religion. If the Folly and Impertinency of weak and wilful Men transports us to such an Impatience, that we are only delighted with the Conversation of those who are wise and discreet, though we bear the other without Insolence and Reproach, we need not be ashamed of that Impatience; and if the Weight and Sharpness of our Sufferings and Afflictions drive us to no other Remedy than of our Prayers, God is well pleased with an Impatience and Importunity, and even Expostulation in those Prayers. Not to feel Pain, is a much worse Sign than any Impatience to bear it; a Lethargy being much more dangerous than a Fever; not to be sensible of the Calamities and Afflictions we suffer, is no Instance of our Patience. We are not apt our selves to think Men in great Wants and Distresses, if they find not some Means to make them known, if they complain not at all. And God Almighty will not know that we have Need of him; *i. e.* that we do in Truth think that we have Need of him, if we do not complain and cry unto him; and the more we complain, and the louder we cry, the more, and the sooner, he will help and rescue us. If we have taken all those Courses, and applied all those Remedies, the Wisdom and Integrity of our own Souls, our most dispassioned Reason and Understanding could suggest to us, and our Enemies continue still exalted in the same Fury and Malice, and Power over us; if our Afflictions fall so thick upon us, and extend themselves in that Manner about us, that we can see no way out of them, but seem to be environed with Darkness and Despair; so that we are not only in Danger of sinking under the Oppression of our Enemies, but of being shaken and staggered in our Innocence and Uprightness, which is the greatest Triumph wicked Men can have over us; God will be well content that we come to him with an *usque quo Domine*, and accuse him of some Delay in our Protection. Our Devotion is reasonably inflamed with this Passion, and our Prayers are the better spirited by it, and prevail the sooner. If we could pray as we ought to do, our Prayers would be scarce finished, before we find some Effect of them; and we should no sooner pour out the Grief of our Hearts in earnest and pious Prayers, than we should find a Succession of Joy to our Hearts upon such pouring out; God being never so disposed to Bounty, as upon those fervent Addresses.

But if our Impatience drives us from our Prayers, and to complain of God Almighty, instead of complaining to him; if instead of going to him with this *usque quo*, we make his deferring to help us, an Argument against our going to him any more; and will depend on him no longer, because he is longer in relieving us than we would have him; and think our selves at Liberty to provide for our selves, by receding from the severe and strict Rules of our Duty, and complying with those who have departed farthest from them: If we begin to believe we have been in the Wrong all this Time; at least observed the Rules and Dictates of Justice and Conscience, and Religion, with more Severity, Rigor and Perseverance, than upon these Disadvantages we are obliged

to

to do, because the Right hath prospered no better; and conclude, that God is contented that his Church be robbed and spoiled, his Religion prophaned, his Anointed oppressed and deposed, and all Men destroyed who will not submit to, and join with the present Power; because now, when there seems no other Hope left to preserve and vindicate all those, he does not immediately succour us, by his own immediate and almighty Judgments: I say, if our Impatience and Importunity have this Operation upon us, and works a Distemper in us, not much better than that of *Job's* Wife; and when we should carry the *usque quo* to God in our Prayers, and ask how long he will forget us, and defer our Deliverance, we disconsolately (to say no worse) apply it to our selves, and ask how long we shall continue innocent; how long we shall in those rough, melancholick and untrodden ways of Poverty, Imprisonment and Banishment, please our selves with the cold, and unnourishing Comfort of being Honest, and in the Right; and sacrifice the Ease and Pleasure, and Profit which we have, and might again enjoy in this World, to the remote Hope and Expectation of the next, and so instead of praying to God, we murmur against him; it is no wonder if our Perplexities continue and increase; and whilst we have a mix'd and joint Dependance upon God's extraordinary Assistance, and our own Policy and Artifice, we find our selves insensibly intangled in new Labarinths, and the Kinds and Degrees of our Sufferings to increase and multiply, and our Comfort and Patience in our Sufferings to lessen and decay.

GOOD God, we have obeyed the Dictates of that Reason and Understanding, and Conscience, which thou hast endued us with, for the preventing those Calamities, which by the Power of wicked Men are brought upon us, and for the getting out of them since our falling into them; however, by thy Grace our Innocence, and entire Confidence and Dependance upon thee continues, and preserves us from utterly fainting. Though our several interchangeable, and terrible Oppressions have so broken our Understanding, and our own Restlessness and Sighs, and Melancholy so darkned, and dazled our Eyes, that we cannot see and discern by which Way, or what Means thou dost intend our Deliverance; yet thy Face is not so totally hid from us, but that we have a glimmering of some Beams of thy Countenance. Our Sufferings continue, but our Satisfaction and Comfort in those Sufferings continue too, and our Conscience tells us we do that which is most acceptable to thee. Gracious Father, how long wilt thou stand at this Distance from us, and suffer our Weakness to struggle with this mighty Oppression, and expose us to these Heart-breaking Languishings, and these powerful Temptations? Lighten our Eyes, that we may see thy Deliverance, how far off soever it be, and that our Hearts may rejoice in the Bounty thou dost intend us hereafter. Amen.

P S A L M XIV.

THE wary and deliberate Man, who thinks and weighs his Words before he utters them, hath great Advantage in his Conversation in this World; we being bound in Charity to believe he thinks as he speaks,

speaks, until his Actions give the Lye to his Tongue; and even then, if he pretends to be heartily sorry for, and to repent of those Actions, we are again obliged so far to credit that Repentance, as at least not to believe it counterfeit: So that he that speaks honestly, and piously, and religiously, hath Power to lead the charitable Man into a Circle of being deceived, and imposed upon successively. But God (who hath reserved that Privilege peculiarly to himself) hath another Language to judge us by, than the Language of our Lips; and examines not so much the Words of our Mouth, as the Words of our Heart; and discerns too often, that when we appear and seem to be very good and devout Christians in our Words, we are directly Atheists in our Hearts.

* *And though they say, The Lord liveth, surely they swear falsely,* says the Prophet *Jeremy*; let what we say be never so true, if we believe it not to be so, we have not spoken Truth. Custom hath brought many to Church, who forget why they came thither, when they are there; and we too frequently find our selves at our Prayers, when we least think of him to whom we pretend to say those Prayers. And as they whom we trust, and are familiar with, have much more Power to do us Hurt, and betray us, and expose us to Ruin, than our open and professed Enemies, towards whom we stand upon our Guard; and whom the World looks upon as unjust, at least as disaffected towards us: So God himself suffers more Dishonour by those who pretend to his Service, who have been formerly received into his Church, and profess the Religion enjoined by him, and in their Lives and Actions practise those Things which are inconsistent with, and destructive to that Religion, than from those who really understand him not, and therefore never make any Shew of looking after him. Let us flatter our selves whilst we will, with an Opinion of the Merit of our true and right Opinions of God, and our Saviour, and of his Holy Spirit; of our being Christians, and true Members of that his Church, against which the Gates of Hell shall never prevail; it is to be very reasonably feared, that the pure confessed Atheist, who doth not know God at all, and therefore never thinks of pleasing him, believes that there are no such Places as Heaven and Hell, and so considers not the ways that lead to either, but determines all his Hopes and Fears within that Span of Life that Nature allows us in this World; either hath not seen those Books, which we call the Scripture, or if he hath, looks upon them as the Invention, or Fancy, or Speculation of Men, and so no farther the Objects of his Faith, than they are of his Reason: I say, we may reasonably believe this direct, plain Atheist, if he observes those Rules of Virtue which the Light of Nature leads him to, to be more like to find the extraordinary Protection and Favour, and Salvation of Almighty God; since a Man may have his Debts paid, and be delivered out of Prison, and yet never know to whom he owes the Obligation; than the practical hypocritical Atheist, the proud false Traducer of the Fame and Reputation of his Neighbour, the cruel and rebellious Oppressor of the Innocent; who whilst with his Lips he acknowledges God to be the Creator of Heaven and Earth, and his holy Scriptures to be the Voice of his own Mouth, doth yet foolishly in his Heart say there is no God, by neglecting to do all that his Divine Majesty hath enjoined, and doing all that he hath expressly forbidden to be done. And without Question,

tion, as good Parts, and Education, and Example, and good Conversation, are so many Aggravations against him, whose Mind is not improved by those extraordinary Advantages; so they who shall be found Atheists in Christian Congregations, who magnify God in their Opinions and Discourses, and condemn him in their Practice, have a more dismal Account to make, than the most impious Men, who have only breathed in Heathen and barbarous Climates.

Merciful Father, who of all the Parts which thou hast created, hast directed us to dedicate our Hearts to thee; take those Hearts of ours into thy immediate Patronage and Protection: And how much soever we may be corrupted by the Weakness and Frailty of our Nature, or transported by the Violence of our Passions and Affections, to a Forgetfulness of thee, and of our Duty to thee; yet keep our Hearts entire and devout towards thee, that no irreverent Thought may dwell and inhabit there. Convert those, who for want of knowing or considering thee, oppress and devour thy Servants; and since they have that Excess of Courage as to condemn thee, who art only worthy to be feared, infuse into them a Distrust and Jealousy, and Fear of one another, and of all things else in which they have been most confident, till they are confounded and lost in the Circle of their own groundless and idle Fears; that the Salvation of those who have faithfully depended on thee, may be seen to proceed purely from thee; and that thou hast turned our Captivity into Joy and Gladness in our own Country and Habitations. Amen.

P S A L M XV.

IF we had a Prospect of Peace and Plenty, and all the Pleasures imaginable presented to us, and there were between us and it such a Gulph or Precipice, as it was not possible for us to pass to it; or if the Difficulties were such, that the Danger in the Way was not less visible, than the Security in the End; we should lose much of our Appetite towards the Pursuit, and feel our selves as much frightened by the one, as invited by the other: If God Almighty himself did invite us to him, as the only Comfort and Repose in whom we can find all the Joy and Pleasure we can propose to our selves, and the only Rock upon which we can reasonably rely and depend; if yet our Approach and Ascent to him were so difficult and steep, that our Breath would not serve to carry us through the Journey; if there were so many other Rocks in the Way, as would quite tire us before we can get to that Rock of Defence; it would be little more refreshment to us, than the Sight of a good Port will be to a Man that is shipwrackt in the Sea, whose Ruin seems the more grievous, in that it is at so easy a Distance from a Deliverance: If, having given us but narrow and weak Capacities and Faculties of Understanding, God should expect great Speculations in Knowledge from us, and that we should comprehend more of him and his Attributes, than that Understanding will extend to: If, having created us with strong Passions and Affections of Nature, he would not admit us into his Corporation, except we did subdue and annihilate all those Passions and Affections, and upon the Matter, renounce that Nature which he hath created

created us of; we might have some Cause to look with Apprehension and Melancholick upon our Condition in this World, and have more Fear than Hope of amending it in the next. But when he requires nothing of us but what is in our own Power to do, and offers us a Habitation in his own holy City, upon no stricter Conditions than we are bound to, and pretend to perform, to make our Residence in every ordinary Corporation; we shall be very much to blame, and in truth inexcusable, if we are disappointed of so inestimable a Purchase, for the not Payment of so easy a Consideration.

Integrity in our Actions, and Truth in our Words, to be reputed honest in what we do, and true Men in what we say, is so necessary to our Conversation in this World, that if we entertained no Thought of the next, for our pure Advantage in this we desire the Reputation of it. And yet these plain, easy Virtues, without which we cannot endure to be thought to be, and in our own account it is the greatest Infamy to be without, carry us a great Part of our Journey, are a great Part of the Qualification is prescribed to us to make us worthy to be Citizens of the New *Jerusalem*. But then this Duty of the Heart, living innocently and uprightly, and the other Duty of the Mouth, speaking truly of Things, and candidly of Persons, is not restrained and terminated within the narrow Circle of our own Activity, the whole Duty comprehended within what we do our selves: It is not enough to be just in our own Actions, and not oppress our Neighbours our selves, and punctual in our own Words, and not traduce and slander our Neighbours our selves; but we must, to the utmost of our Power and Capacity, protect honest Men from being oppressed by others, rescue them from the Violence of others that would oppress them, and redeem their Reputation and good Name from the Liberty and Scandal of other Mens Tongues; discountenance that Falshood and Slander, which by the Dexterity and Wit of passionate and uncharitable Men is ready to prevail against the Innocent, who hath not Courage, or Skill, or Interest enough to make his Innocency and Integrity appear. We must not take up a Reproach against our Neighbour: *Non sustinuit proximo fieri opprobrium*, says the Hebrew and the Chaldee Paraphrase. We are not to sit still whilst honest Men are undone in their Fortune or their Fame, as if it was nothing to us. An Unconcernedness in what other Men do or suffer, is very far from the Innocence of a good Christian, indeed is very far from the Obligation of civil Justice and Policy. Whosoever hath it in his Power to hinder another Man from doing Mischief, and does not hinder him, is guilty of the Mischief he does, and obliged in Conscience to pay the Damage. If such a Neutrality were agreeable to the Duty of a good Christian, or a good Man, Princes of all Men were in the worst Condition; for any Combination of wicked and rebellious Men might very easily destroy them, if other Men might be good Subjects, and yet sit still and refrain to assist them. They do but flatter themselves against the Light of Reason, which at some time or other will break out upon them from the Light of their own Conscience, who say, That so they contribute not towards the oppressing that Power to which they ought to be subject, into what Distresses soever it falls, they are not guilty of the Mischief that ensues. And we may observe, that in the Beginning of all Rebellions and Commotions, the active and seditious Party use all the Skill they can to incline Men to an Indifferency and a Neutrality, without obliging them farther to the favouring and protecting their Attempts;

tempts; well knowing, that they who out of Laziness, or Craft, or Fear have once brought themselves to that Temper of quietly looking on, will in a short time, with the Conscience of not having done what they ought in Duty to have done, be easily persuaded to somewhat they at first meant not to have done; at least, that they will not in the end be able to give any great hindrance to the Progress of this Mischief they at first so tamely suffer'd themselves to behold: And they are rarely deceived in that Conclusion. *Par est delinquere, & delinquentes non prohibere* says the wise Casuist *Grotius*: Certainly whosoever does not assist to the utmost of his Ability the innocent Man from the Violence of the wrong Doer, and vindicate him from the Malice of the backbiting Tongue, by publishing the Truth on his behalf, when he is not able to do it, or to do it so well himself, fails in the main Duty of the Text, and is more guilty than he ought to be, of taking up a Reproach against his Neighbour.

Justice is so plausible a Virtue, and of that sovereign Influence even upon the Nature of Man, that as no Man but pretends to be a Lover of it, so in truth all Men do sometimes, and in some Cases, usually administer it, if they lose nothing by it, and can get nothing by being unjust. There is no Person living that will not be just in his Sentence and Judgment; there is no Man that is not ready to say another Man ought to keep all his Oaths, and observe all the Promises he hath lawfully made and entered into; and if it be no Prejudice or Inconvenience to him, he is willing to do so himself: But if he finds he hath sworn or promised to do that, which, as the Case stands now, may bring his Person in Danger, or expose his Estate to Damage, which he foresaw not when he entered into those Obligations, his Justice is at a stand, and his Charity both begins and ends at home; this Hazard and Loss must not be undergone for those Oaths and Promises; and he finds Distinctions for his own Case, which being admitted, destroys the Essence and the End of all Oaths and Promises whatsoever: So corrupted is all our Justice and our Reason, when it is conversant with and upon our Interest. Hence it comes that we have found out so many Expedients to avoid and frustrate lawful Oaths and Promises, and to incline us to take new and unlawful Oaths, rather than submit to any Inconveniencies for refusing them; and there are few who are furnished with Distinctions to dispense with the good old ones, but are supplied with Logick enough to persuade the taking of new. They who believe they are absolved from lawful Oaths, because the Power to which they swore Obedience is now oppressed, and not able to protect them, will easily be persuaded, for the avoiding any notable Damage or Inconvenience, to take an unlawful one, because the Matter of it being not lawful, nor the Authority that administers it, no Man is bound to keep it: And so they avoid the first, which they have a mind to keep, because they shall be Losers if they do; and run into the latter, which they have no mind to take, because they shall be Losers if they do not, and because they resolve not to keep it: which is the greatest Infamy to Christian Religion, and a greater Contempt of God than the Heathens were ever guilty of; who, out of Reverence to their false Gods, never durst make them Witnesses to any Promise or Undertaking, which they resolved not inviolably to keep and observe. Indeed they who have sworn to do that which is not lawful to be done are absolved from the Obligation, not from the Guilt of that wicked Oath: It was a high Dishonour to God to take that Oath, and it will be

be a great and unpardonable Addition to the Wickedness to observe it. So that they who out of any worldly Policy have entangled themselves in such Engagements, have departed from their Innocence, and have it now only in their Power to be more or less wicked. On the other hand, whosoever hath sworn that which is lawful for him to swear, and in his Power to perform, can never with any pretence of Conscience decline it, how much Inconvenience or Loss soever it may produce to his particular. *David's* honest Man will not change his Mind after he hath sworn, though it be to his own Hurt or Damage.

To this Integrity and Veracity in our Words and Actions, we must add Charity, which is but the translating moral Virtues into Christian Language; and is, in truth, rather a better Qualification, than a larger Extension of the other Duties. A mere moral Man may be very just in doing right to all Men, and very bountiful in relieving all who want, and very magnanimous in pardoning those who do him Injury; but he can never be charitable, which is practising moral Virtues upon Christian Principles; giving, because he hath received from God Almighty to that purpose; and forgiving, because he expects Pardon from God for his own Sins upon that Condition. We need not be ashamed of being reproached with living like good moral Men; if we do so upon Christian Grounds, for Love of Heaven and Fear of Hell, we have Christianity enough, and have *David's* word for it, that we shall have as much Happiness as we can desire: But whether the Exercise of this Christian Virtue of Charity does restrain us from the Exercise of any other piece of good Husbandry, which by the Wisdom of Laws is tolerated and permitted in Christian Kingdoms and States, may be safely doubted, with Charity and Reverence enough to those who are of another Opinion; since it is not like that *David* would pronounce that simply unlawful, which * *Moses* allowed in some Causes, and to some Persons, to be done and practised.

Gracious God, who hast vouchsafed to let us know upon what Conditions we may be received into thy Protection and eternal Favour; give us Grace to practise those Virtues thou hast enjoined us; make us to love Justice in all our Actions, and Uprightness in all our Words; make us as tender in the Wrongs and Injuries done to our Neighbours, as if they were done to our selves; infuse into our Hearts an abominating of all Vice, by how great Persons soever countenanced; and a Love and Reverence of Virtue, and of virtuous Men, in how little Esteem soever they are in this World: And let us do all this out of our true Love of thee, and of thy Son Christ Jesus. Amen.

P S A L M XVI.

THE true Christian can never want true Comfort, whatsoever Condition befalls him. If Almighty God vouchsafes to establish him in a prosperous Condition, his Comfort and Delight is to make others Sharers with him in that Blessing; he seeks out and cherishes good and virtuous Men, and is liberal and charitable to all, without distinguishing of Men in the

5 N

exercise

* Deut. xxiii. 20.

exercise of Charity, by any Names of Faction or Relation soever Mankind being next under God, the large Object of that Christian Duty; thereby making himself God's Administrator, by faithfully distributing that Plenty to others, which he hath put into his Hands, and so in a manner makes him a Return of the Good he hath received from him. Not that God stands in need of this Service of his, or that he merits any thing from him by performing it; tho' it is true, God is very well pleased and delighted to see us love and cherish those whom he loves; but it is no otherwise, than he is said to be grieved when we are wicked and forgetful of him; whereas in truth, he is neither the better nor the worse, whether we do good or ill: Only our Saviour himself, by performing that most exalted Work of our Redemption, at the inestimable Price of his own precious Blood, out of his pure Love to Mankind and to the precious Image of his Father, merited of his Father by that unvaluable Act; who was so well pleased with his Compassion towards those his Children who lived upon the Earth, and to see that Compassion so extended, as to wipe out all Distinctions and Disadvantages, and Prejudices of Names, and to derive his Goodness to the *Gentiles*, as well as to the *Jews*; and since they were all equally the Creation of the Father, to make them equally capable of the Redemption by the Son. And yet we need not be the less in love with doing well, because by the most exact Execution of our Duty we merit nothing from, or carry Advantage to him who takes an account of all that we do, and for whose Sake we are to do as well as we can. It is enough that he gives us other Objects enough to merit from, all Mankind to instruct by our Example and Charity, and all virtuous and worthy Persons to cherish and relieve, and support by our immediate Conversation, and Counsel and Bounty; and that all this is very acceptable to him, who looks upon and discerns all this. Let us not perplex our selves with hard Words of Justification and Merit, which signify no more, or less, than they who use them intend they should: If we oblige those whom it is in our Power to oblige, and merit from good Men, from whom we may merit, God will find out a Name for the Good we do, which shall signify as much to our Advantage, as if we merited from himself. If we live as if we had set God always before us, as if he were always at our right Hand, we shall be so wary in all that we do, and so supported in all that we suffer, that we can never fall into a Habit of Sin, and consequently not into a Habit of Misery: And truly, if we have not this Support always by us, the Consideration that God is still looking upon us, it is the Want of Wit, as well as Piety; it being not in our Power to put our selves out of his Presence, and only in our Election to have him by us, as our Comforter and Assistant; or as near us, as a Judge and Avenger. If we will not set him before us, and place him on our right Hand, by our continual Meditation of his Greatness and Goodness, and by our continual Prayer for his Help and Protection, he will set himself over us, and place us on his left Hand, and so be nearest us in his Judgments, when we have done our utmost to drive him farthest from us, and to remove our selves farthest from his Presence.

There need little else to make us good Christians, than this thorough Exercise of that Consideration of the continual Presence of Almighty God, and of our doing all that we do, and suffering all that we suffer, in his Sight. None of us want Experience of the Encouragement Men receive by other Persons looking on them, how they are carried even beyond

yond their own Strength upon several Attempts, when it is in the View of those by whom they desired to be valued; and on the contrary, the most loose and vicious Natures are restrained from the Practice of any Vice, by the Presence of those they love or fear, to whom they know such Practice renders them unacceptable or offensive; so that in Truth we could not avoid the doing well as often as we are able, much less but avoid the doing ill, if we had the least Thought that God were by us, and had always his Eye upon what we thought, or said, or did, or suffered.

And if our Lot in this World falls out to be so sad, that we taste only of the Bitterness and Misery, without ever being refreshed with the Happiness and Prosperity of it; if instead of generous, and charitable, and merciful Men, to interpret the Weakness and Error that is in us with Candor and Indulgence, and to support and relieve our Distresses with Gentleness and Bounty, at least with Pity and Commiseration, we meet only with those rough and cruel, and unchristian Persons, who with their unmerciful Severity, make our Weakness and Errors appear more gross and unpardonable than in Truth they are; and so as far as in them lies, cause the Loss and Ruin of our good Name and Reputation, to attend our other Misfortunes; who improve our Calamities by new Injuries; and having robb'd us of our Fortunes and Estates, take away our Liberties too, and threaten our Lives; macerating our Bodies with imprisonments and Torments, and tormenting our Minds with reproaching and contemning all Religion, Virtue and Honesty; which it may be is as real, and sensible, and sharp a Pain, as the cutting off, or maiming any Limb can be: We have a fair Portion still, considering that if we keep our Innocence and Integrity, we shall not only in our nobler Part, the Soul, be recompensed for the short temporary Suffering we have submitted to, with Eternity of Joy and Comfort (and who would not purchase such Jewels at so easy a Price?) but our very Body, which hath felt the Blows and Wounds of proud and malicious Adversaries, shall appear more beautiful, even by those Deformities. That Body which was worn away with Oppression and Affliction, and was grown pale and wan with Imprisonment, Famine, and loss of Fortune, and of Friends, shall appear again with more Freshness, and Vivacity, and Courage, than his full, smooth, and disdainful Persecutors, who shall be dejected and confounded with the Envy of the others Condition: That Body which was exposed as a Gazing-stock to the People, maimed, and was dismembered upon the Scaffold by the Power and Tyranny of cruel, and bloody, and implacable Enemies, shall appear recollected and entire, with Crowns and Garlands about those Wounds and Scars; whilst his wanton and insatiable Murtherers are tormented, and torment themselves with the Glory of his Martyrdom. If we had but Sense and Consideration enough of this very Triumph of our Body in the Resurrection, if it preserve it self from that Corruption which only its own Guilt can bring upon it, we should be very little concerned in the short Subjection it undergoes here, to the Rage and Fury of malicious Adversaries, and Oppression.

Gracious Father, we have no Person to fly unto, in these our great and heavy Afflictions, but to thy Majesty; nor any Title or Pretext to fly to thee, but thy own free and unlimited Mercy. If we have in any Degree performed, or been willing to perform our Duty

to thee, and to those whom thou hast appointed us to be subject to; and for that our Integrity and Good-will, been subject to, and undergone many Miseries which other Men have, and we might have avoided, by declining that our Duty; we are so far from thinking that we have any Merit thereby towards thee, that we do from the bottom of our Hearts acknowledge, that thy Grace, whereby we have been enabled to do well, hath been a greater Blessing and Obligation from thee upon us, than thy hitherto preserving us from the destructive Power of our Enemies. Support us, we beseech thee, throughout this Tryal thou thinkest fit to exercise us in; and if it be thy good Pleasure, let us see a joyful and happy End of it; and put an end to those Factions and Divisions, which hinder us from enjoying thy Blessings in our own Country. However, if thou thinkest not good to restore us to that temporal Felicity, infuse into our Hearts the present full Contemplation of the Joys we shall hereafter enjoy in thy Sight, in Body and Soul, in a comfortable and glorious Resurrection. Amen.

P S A L M XVII.

YET a little while, and the wicked shall not be*, yea, thou shalt diligently consider his Place, and it shall not be, was once the Comfort which David administred against Faintness and Dejection of Spirit, upon the good Fortune and Success which ill Men often are possessed of in the ways of their Wickedness. And indeed, let the Prosperity be what it will, so great, that they seem fortified, and even inclosed in their own Plenty, that they can neither see the Misery, nor hear the Cries of those they have oppressed; let the Pride be such, that they contemn all whom they have overcome, and contemplate only what they have gained and are possessed of by Violence, without vouchsafing to look up to that Hand who hath lent them Power, lest from thence they might feel some Impression or Inclination towards Mercy or good Nature; and their Malice such, that after they have driven away and banished those whom they love not, and so stripped them of their Estates and Fortunes, they pursue them even in Banishment, and make it Capital for any Friend, or Son, or Servant, to correspond with them, or to relieve them in their utmost Wants and Extremities. Let them, to all the Craft, and Savageness, and Cruelty of the Fox, and the Wolf, and the Tyger, have the Strength of the Lion; such a Power and Watchfulness, that none can escape their Fury; yet if all this Prosperity be but a Gust, a Breath, how strong and violent soever; if the same Men who have observed their Pride, and felt their Cruelty, shall likewise see their Destruction and Extirpation, their Families rooted out, and their Memories blasted; there will want no great Stock of Patience and Courage to ride out this Storm, nor will the Pain or Hazard appear much inferior to the Recompence.

But if this Tyranny gets Root, and prospers and spreads it self in an Order and Method of Continuance; if it be retained into God's Service, and made a Part of his Armory, to execute his angry Judgments; if instead of being a Blast, it be confirmed into a lasting mighty Wind,

And all virtuous, and honest, and conscientious Men, be made as Chaff before it: If their Surfeits of Blood and Rapine turn to Strength and Nourishment, and after they have widowed and laid desolate so many worthy and noble Families, they shall themselves be full of Children, the Ornaments of good old Age, and the choicest Favours and Blessings which God vouchsafes to those with whom he is best pleased; and instead of vomiting up the Riches which they had swallowed down, according to the Judgment in *Job* upon the proud Oppressor, * *they shall leave their ill-gotten Goods to be inherited by their Children*: It will be no wonder if Men are a little startled, and finding their Condition so different from what God usually affords to ill Men, they begin to think that they are to be reconciled and united as well to the Instruments, as to submit to the Punishment. *Envy not the Glory of a Sinner, for thou knowest not what shall be his End*, was the Injunction of the Son of *Syrach*; and there had need be a very pregnant Reason to keep us from Envy, when any kind of Glory is the Object: But when we do know what his End is, and see it as full of Glory as his Beginning; when we see his Evening as fresh and vigorous as his Noon, and that he seems to set like the Sun, to be succeeded by a new and brighter Heat, the wise Man's Reason is at an End, and we had need of another Problem to restrain us from the Temptation of Envy; at least from that Dejection of Spirit, which *Solomon* himself fell into, when he concluded, that, † *in much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow*. If Wisdom excelleth Folly, as far as Light excelleth Darknes; if this Folly can find a nearer way through that Darknes to the Things desirable by wise Men, the wise Man hath no great Advantage by having his Eyes in his Head; and if one Event happeneth to them all, it is a very natural Question that *Solomon* asked. *Why was I then more wise?* And the Indignation wrought so far upon him, as to conclude, that the great Blessing which himself had asked of God, when he might have obtained any other, and for asking of which as the best, God had blessed him so miraculously, was no better than Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, since they prospered best who were without it.

We are yet to break through this Discouragement; and if we have that Integrity we pretend to, the Labour is not great. The Appetite and Envy of this present Power and Pleasure intoxicates us no less, than the Passion transports them, and may make our Misery as full of Guilt as their Pride is; since a vehement Desire to be wicked, is in a Degree more inexcusable, being kept up only with the Malice of the Affliction; when he that hath attained to the Wickedness he desires, hath his Understanding corrupted and infatuated with the Pleasure of his Sin, and is thereby less in his own Power and Jurisdiction. If we did enough remember what it concerns them to forget, that they have their Portion in this Life, and are therefore filled with the Treasure of this World, upon which they have set their whole Hearts, that they may have no Pretence or Title to that of the next; we should with Pity look upon the Bargain they have made for themselves; and tremble more at what they are to suffer hereafter, than be troubled for what for the present they enjoy. When we see Men languishing in Fevers and Dropsies, we do not envy them the Pleasure they have enjoyed in former Riots and Excesses; and when we see Men wasted and faint in

5 O

Con-

* *Job* xx. 15.† *Eccles.* i. 18.

Consumptions, or worn away with more noisome Diseases, we do not envy them the Pleasure of their former Lusts, and License: And truly if we did present to our clear Thoughts, the severe Interest blood Rebels and Traytors must unavoidably pay for their short Triumphs in this World, we could not think that their dying in the same Prosperity they had lived in, and their leaving Children to succeed them in their Offices and Estates, and to inherit their Unrighteousness, any Addition or Improvement of their Happiness. *The Children will complain of an ungodly Father, because they shall be reproached for his Sake,* * say Ecclesiast. No Man hath Reason to be proud of leaving an Estate behind him, and such Children to inherit it, as will quickly grow ashamed of the Memory of their own Father: And to wicked Men whose wisest Ambition ought to be, that they and their Actions might quickly be forgotten, it is the greatest Curse can befall them, that they leave Posterity to keep up their Infamy, and to put the World on ten in mind of their Unrighteousness. In a word, if in the deepest Deluge of Misery that is ready to overwhelm us, we can keep such a Confidence about us, as may carry us to God in honest and faithful Prayers; such as may warrant us, from our own Innocence and Simplicity that God's own Judgments and Purpose is not so severe against us, as those are of our Neighbours; if under those Clouds of Oppression, and in that Night of our Affliction, he does discern that we do in Truth according to the best of our Understanding, guide our selves by those Rules which he hath given us; he will take us so far into his own immediate Protection, that we shall be so much satisfied in the Conscience of having pleased him, and done as he would have us, and suffered as he hath found best for us, that we shall only pity those Instruments of his Displeasure, who have taken so deep a Draught of Joy in this World that they have quenched all Thirst of the inestimable Comfort of that which is to come.

Merciful God, what Portion soever thou thinkest fit to assign us of Bitterness, by the Cruelty and Success of our merciless Enemies, and how deep rooted soever thou sufferest them to seem to be in the Prosperity and Glory of their Wickedness, suffer no such ungodly Envy to steal into our Hearts, as may beget the least Wish that we were like them in their Faults, so we might be like them in their Fortune: But give us such a Confidence in thee, and such Grace to pray to thee, with that uprightness and simplicity of Heart, that may make our Prayers worthy to be heard by thee, and to prevail with thee to support us in our heavy Sufferings, till in thy good time thou thinkest fit to deliver us from them. Amen.

P S A L M XVIII.

THERE is no Man so miserable, who is not able by his own Experience of God's Blessing upon himself, or by his Observation of what God hath done for others, to present to his Memory a Deliverance from as great Distresses as he now undergoes; which does, or ought to administer great Hope and Comfort to him: And there is no Man in so full

* Eccles. xli. 7.

full Prosperity and Happiness, that cannot call to mind some Example of a Condition as good and well-settled as his seems to be, that by some sudden Revolution of Providence, hath been brought as low, and exposed to as much Misery as that Man's whom at present he looks upon with most pity; which does or ought to beget some Humility and Fear in him. And therefore, the mightiest Prince, who seems to be in the most absolute and uninterrupted Possession of Greatness and Power, ought to be so much the more solicitous for God's Favour, and so much the more vigilant to procure it by his exemplary Piety and Virtue, than other more inferior Men; by how much he stands more in need of a more immediate and wonderful Protection than the poorest Creature, who is not liable to so many Accidents, nor capable of such a Downfall. If he makes War, and hath an Army numerous enough, and bold enough to undertake the Conquest of other Kingdoms, he hath not only need of God's Assistance to preserve those Numbers, and to improve that Courage, and to infuse Fear and Faintness into the Hearts of his Enemies, but of his more immediate Goodness to dispose such vast Numbers, and such unruly Mettle and Spirit, to an Obedience and Submission to his single Authority and Commands; without which wonderful Influence from above, they could never be induced to watch, and bleed, and die, to his peculiar Benefit and Advantage, but would share their dear-bought Conquests among themselves, whilst he remained at best but a Prisoner to his own Army. If he enjoys the Blessing of Peace, and rules over a numerous People, (which is the most absolute Wealth, and valuable Greatness of any Prince) he hath not only need of God's especial Grace to enable him to administer Justice to his Subjects, whereby he may be worthy of that large Jurisdiction, but of his Almighty Providence to incline the Hearts of such a Multitude to such an Awe and Reverence towards him, that they may believe him to be worthy of his Government, or to such a religious Submission to God's own Institution, as to know themselves to be obliged to Duty and Obedience, though they do believe him to be unworthy of so high a Trust: It being the most miraculous Act, not only of God's Kindness but of his Power, to produce such a Harmony of Obedience out of such a Discord of Affections, that the Pride, and Passions, and Humours, and Interests, and Ambitions of a whole Nation, should be wrapt up and kneaded into a joint and universal Submission to the Dictates and Order of one Man, whom much the major Part never saw; and who, if there were as joint a Concurrence to leave him to himself, and neither to assist, help, or serve him, (without an active rebelling against him, or using violence to him) would hardly be able to supply himself with Bread to sustain Nature, or to manifest Strength or Power enough to distinguish him from another Man. This strange Temper of Mind, nothing but meer Conscience, and the Impression of God's Spirit could produce; since natural Reason alone, though it would submit to Order and Government for Self-preservation and Advantage, would very hardly be prevalent enough to reconcile and unite all Affections to the Power of this particular Person, except he were in all Qualifications and Abilities of Mind and Body far superior to the rest. And therefore, when the most glorious Monarch hath taken the fullest Survey of all his Greatness and Power, number'd his Subjects, mustered his Armies, considered the Strength and Impregnableness of his Castles and Forts, and the ample Provisions of his Magazines, he will have good Cause to conclude how insecure he

is in all those, if God himself be not General in those Armies, and vouchsafes not to have some Command in those Forts; without which, if all other Enemies and Accidents fail, he shall find the Strivings of his own People too mighty for him; and that he is no more able to subdue the Perverseness and Follies of that rude Vulgar he so much contemns, than he is to contend with the boisterous Fury of the Winds, or to restrain the fierce Rage of the Seas.

As God hath vouchsafed more extraordinary Favours to Princes and great Men than he hath to others, and is still to do more for them, so he expects a reciprocal and proportionable Return of Duty, and Acknowledgment, and Obedience from them; and if he finds them remiss and negligent, and obstinate towards him, though his first Judgment may be a Connivance at their Perverseness, and suffering them to enjoy the License of their own Hearts, yet he is in truth more incensed against them than at others; and if they are so hard of hearing, that they will sleep out his ordinary Remembrances, and not hearken to his smaller Voice in his Ministers, and the Cries and Sighs of those whom they oppress, or suffer others to oppress, he hath a mighty Voice which will awaken them; his Thunder they shall hear, being the peculiar Voice he reserves to terrify and affright Princes and proud Offenders. His most ordinary Voice is heard by the poor and ordinary Sinner; the least Judgment he can send, an unusual Rain in Harvest to spoil the Fruit of the Earth when it is ripe, or an unusual Drought in the Spring to destroy it in the Seed; the Oppression of a powerful Neighbour who takes what is not his own, and the Uncharitableness of a cruel Creditor, who requires his own with such Circumstances of Rigor, as swerve as much from the Rules of Justice, as the Tyranny of the others, awakens the poor Labourer and Countryman to look up to Heaven, and to implore the Mercy and Favour of his Creator: But such low Sounds, and hollow Accents, reach but the Ears at most, never touch the Hearts of great and powerful Persons, whom less than a Clap of Thunder cannot startle, and make them remember that there is a Power superior to their own, and to which they must account for the ill Exercise of that which hath been delegated to them.

It is observed by many, that Princes and Men in the greatest Power, whose Education should best prepare them to understand natural Causes and Effects, are most appaled, and express more trouble and unpreparedness of Mind in great Tempests of Lightning and Thunder, than meaner and vulgar-spirited Persons use to do: And it is not strange they should do so; for, besides that (let Philosophy suggest what it will of the Accidents and Productions of Nature) it must carry much of Terror with it, being the very Voice of God himself: * *Hast thou an Arm like God? Or canst thou thunder with a Voice like him?* says he, who vouchsafed to expostulate with Job out of the Whirlwind. We cannot marvel, that they who believe Power and Dominion to be only considerable, and worthy of Estimation; and from that little Shadow of it which they think themselves possessed of, have learned to despise all other Men, at least all those who are subject to it, or subdued by it, should tremble and be confounded with such a prodigious Power that they cannot comprehend. The Eyes and Observation of other Men are so filled with Instances of Power, (Power enough to oppress and destroy them, as much as Thunder, and Lightning, and Earthquakes could do) that they

and
ich,
s of
sub-
con-
nds,
and
so
Ac-
mils
nent
joy
d a-
that
his
nom
ich
liar
ers.
er;
the
ing
who
edi-
ve
a-
nd
ds,
rts
an-
to
hat
er,
ses
ed-
ner
uld
Ac-
with
od?
afed
vel,
ble,
ich
men,
mble
not
with
a, as
they
istin-

distinguish not easily of the several and distinct Species of it; and therefore it is very possible, that the Sense of the one may abate the Fear of the other. When the proud and impetuous Person, who does therefore only not fear, because he believes nobody hath power to hurt him, trembles, and is confounded at those Ruptures; and his Pride then administers to his Fear, by suggesting to him, that no other Man's Ruin and Destruction is worthy of all that Noise and Contention: When he sees that Earth upon which he had set his Heart, and that Mountain upon which he meant to secure his proud Hopes, tremble like the warm Heart of a Pigeon, and that the Foundation of that very Mountain is no better than Sand: When he discerns the Difference in Strength and Swiftness, between his Troops of Horse by which he hath obtained so many Victories, and the Clouds and the Winds which now assault him in Terror, and execute him between the Shot of his Cannon, and the Thunder and Lightning which break upon him from those Clouds; in the Danger and Surprise between the poor Ambushes he hath laid for innocent Men, and the Darknes and terrible Obscurity in which God hath wrapped himself in this Tempest, that he can only feel the Blow, not see the Hand; he concludes too late, how vain and childish this Confidence was; and how little a Thing, and insecure that is, which Men call Power, upon the short Experience of Success.

When God pleases he can appear and manifest himself in all this terrible Equipage, for the Preservation of those who entirely rely and depend on him; and he will appear so, when he sees us so compassed in with the Snares of Death, that nothing else will serve to protect us; and it may be some Argument to us, that our Case is not so desperate as it appears to be, because he does not yet vouchsafe to put on that his glorious Apparel in our Defence. But then in this Disquisition, we must be as severe to our selves as to our Enemies, consider what we do, as well as what we suffer: We may be even at the Bottom of many Waters, swallowed up, and kept down by strong and powerful Adversaries, and yet have no Engagement upon God to draw us out; if our Innocence and Integrity be not as apparent, the Strength of our Enemy will be no Argument to him to interpose. The proud Man may fall into the Hands of those who are prouder than he; and the uncharitable Man into their Power who may use him very cruelly; and both have very little hope that God will express any extraordinary Anger on their behalf. God does not delight in any one Species of Justice more, than to suffer the Oppressor to be oppressed, and oppressed by him to whose Ambition he hath contributed; to suffer the Rebel to be punished and undone by those whom they have assisted to rebel: He may suffer those Vessels of Pride and Folly to break one another, but he will never be brought to Thunder in the Behalf of either of them.

If we would entitle our selves to this wonderful Vindication of Providence, we must be honest as well as miserable; be so devout in our Distress, that God may find himself concerned and affronted in our Sufferings; first awaken him with our Piety, before we expect that he should awaken our Adversaries with his Thunder; we must compound an Innocence of Life with an Innocence of Opinion, know there is a Religion of the Hand, as well as a Religion of the Heart; and look to what we do, as well as what we believe; and be more severe to our own Sins, than to the Sins of others; watch the Affections and Inclinations of our own Natures and Appetites, and make head against that Sin to

which we find our selves most like to be transported, though it may steal upon us in such a Dress, as may not make it look like a Sin. Never Man was so wicked, as to be inclined to all Kinds of Sins; and to keep a Man's self free from the Sins to which he hath no Temptation from his Nature, is no degree of Innocence. The rebellious, bloody Man merits not at all in being free from Lust, and attempting upon the Chastity of Women, no more than the licentious, unclean Person does by avoiding Rapine and Robbery, which is not the necessary Road-way to the Sin he loves. If we do not first watch and discover our own Inclinations, and restrain our Appetite, we do not indeed keep our selves from our own Iniquities, the loved Sins of our own Bosom, but from the Iniquities of other Men, which it may be is rather nauseous to our Sense, than grievous to our Conscience. We must not only take heed and avoid the committing the crying Sins of other Men, abhor Rebellion, Murther, and Oppression, but beware lest we contract others by being free from those Sins; that our Knowledge, and Wisdom, and Innocence it self make us not proud and vain-glorious; that we do not impute our having escaped so many Dangers to our own Wariness and Foresight; nay, that we do not impute such Preservations to our Innocence it self, since so many more innocent, and every way more worthy than we, have fallen under the raging Sword, or the more bloody and murderous Axe of their and our cruel and proud Enemies: Above all, that we do not impute our Innocence, upon which all Security depends, to the Effect of our own Wisdom and Providence; but that we do with all Humility and Sincerity acknowledge all to proceed from the mere Goodness, and Bounty, and Mercy of God Almighty; that he alone hath preserved us, when others have perished; and that his Grace only hath supplied us with Innocence and Integrity, whilst so many others, amongst whom it may be some at the first abhorred the Sin they have since acted, as much as we, have been carried away with the Torrent of Rebellion, Impiety, and Prophaneness; and then we may with Confidence assure our selves and expect, that God will likewise deliver us from the Calamities we undergo; and that if his ordinary Protection will not serve, that he will in an extraordinary manner confound, and scatter, and dissolve our Enemies, as Dust before the Wind.

O Lord, in whom we only trust, look down upon us; see and behold how low we are reduced, and how streightly we are compassed; suffer our Cry to come unto thy Ears, and at last think us worthy to be relieved by thy own Hand; and let our proud and deaf Enemies, who will not hear our Cries, or hear them with Delight and Triumph, be awakened by thy loud Voice of Indignation and Judgment upon them: Above all, remember to give thy seasonable and timely Deliverance to the King, whose Suffering is greater and less deserved than ours; deliver him from the Strivings, and Forwardness, and Perverseness of his sinful People, who rebel against him; and if it be thy blessed Will, subdue their Hearts and Affections to a Repentance for the Wickedness they have committed, and to a Resolution for the future to live peaceably and dutifully under him: Or if thou wilt not vouchsafe unto such a wicked Nation the Grace of Repentance, and the Mercy and Honour of being again subjected to him; kindle such an Affection in the Hearts of Strangers towards him, that a new Nation may become his People, and serve him with

that Integrity and Fidelity, which his own have wanted; and let him suddenly feel and receive some Earnest of the Favour thou intendest towards him. Amen.

P S A L M XIX.

WE do not prescribe wiser or better Rules to our selves to judge by, of the Greatness, and Power, and Wisdom of those with whom we live, or live under, than by the Enterprizes we see them undertake, and the Conclusions of those Enterprizes. We judge of the Greatness and Magnificence of Princes by their Buildings and Structures, and Splendor of their Courts; of their Power and Dominion, by the Number of their Subjects, and Strength of their Armies; of their Wisdom and Goodness, by the Orders and Laws which they enact for Government. It is a Perverseness rather than an Incapacity in our Understandings, if by the same Rules and Mediums we do not bring our selves to such an Awe, and Admiration, and Reverence of the Almighty, and Glory, and Goodness of God, as may let in all other Conceptions to us of his Omnipotence, which are necessary to be known by us, with reference to his Love towards us, or our Duty towards him. If the Consideration of the glorious Fabrick of Heaven do not produce in us a full Acknowledgment of the immense Power, and unspeakable Majesty of the great Workman and Creator of it, we do not pay a proportionable Respect and Value to him, which our Reason makes us believe is due to every extraordinary Artificer. When we consider the admirable Order and Method to which he hath subjected the Time which he hath created, the steady, constant Succession of the Day and Night to each other over the whole Hemisphere, and the unspeakable Benefit his poor Creatures of the World do enjoy by that equal Distribution, and the Misery we should be subject to, if it were not for that Providence; how grievous the Day would be to us, if Night came not so seasonably to refresh us; and how uncomfortable and dismal the Night would be to us, if the Day did not quickly appear to inform and employ us: It is very strange, that we can believe that he doth not consider how this precious Time of his, how this Day and this Night is consumed by us; that they are only to inform one another what God does for his Creatures, and give no account to him what those Creatures do against him; that the one of them is only dedicated by us to our Pride and Ambition, and the other to our Lusts, Riots, and Excesses, without bestowing one Minute upon the devout Contemplation and Acknowledgment of the Creator of them. When we find our selves warmed and enlighten'd by the opening of that glorious Eye of the World the Sun, without which we could know no more than they who are in the Grave, and observe the Progress he makes, communicating at the same time his Light and Virtue to all the most distant Parts of the World; it is strange we should not lose our selves, at least that we should not lose all Respect and Value of the low and base Artifices of this World, in the exalted Contemplation of that wonderful Fabrick, and the divine Creator of it. *A Man blowing a furnace is in works of heat, but the sun burneth the mountains three times more, breathing out fiery vapours, and sending forth bright beams:*

it dimmeth the eyes. Great is the Lord that made it, says the Son of Syrach.*

If we had once brought our selves to a just Admiration of these great Works of God, we could not be without a due Veneration of his Works; not enough considering what he hath done, makes us so totally neglect what he hath said. The Laws of no Prince find Contempt, till there be first an Irreverence towards his Person, and an undervaluing his Power; yet, as if God would dispense with us for our not measured contemplating of what he is by what he hath done, and not take Advantage of our not comprehending his Greatness to that degree, or to that end, as to conclude, that whatsoever he bids, we ought to do, without any other Reason, and for no other Cause, than because he enjoins it, (a Respect we are forward enough to pay to great Men, when we would be excused for doing what we ought not for any Consideration whatsoever to do;) his heavenly Majesty vouchsafes to condescend so far, as to prescribe us nothing to do for his Sake, which we ought not really to do for our own; inasmuch as our own Reason, and Conveniency and Benefit would require us to observe those Rules, which his fatherly Goodness hath set down to try our Affection, and Duty, and Obedience to his Authority and Commands.

We think our selves very happy in this World, if we can live under such Laws, whose Sense is so plain and clear, that we can reasonably presume we do understand the Meaning of the Lawmakers; if they are not so perplex'd and intricate, at least liable to so different Interpretations that be our Obedience never so perfect and entire, we may possibly fall within the Censure of the Judge, for not precisely observing the Letter of the Law: Whereas the Law, upon Obedience whereto the Salvation of our Souls depends, is so manifest, and incapable of Doubts to entangle us, that even they who have taken too much Pains, and with too much Success, to render Christian Opinions very difficult, have not been able to raise any Scruples about Christian Practice. Though it is not easy to know all that we may believe, it is not at all hard to know what we are to do, and what we are not to do. The Religion of the Brain may admit a thousand Disputations, when that of the Heart is contracted into one Proposition, in which all Men agree, Love God, and keep his Commandments. Indeed God does not call the Brain to so strict an Account as he does the Heart; that will be always subject to so many Fancies and Appearances, that it is no wonder if we often think amiss, and God is no more angry with us for those erroneous Thoughts, if they proceed not from any corrupt Affection of the Heart, than he is with the Eye for seeing vitious and indecent Objects, which it will be always liable to see, whilst it can see at all; and if the Pleasure and Delight of it steal not through the Eye to the Heart, and find Approbation there, the Eye continues innocent enough. It is true, every Corruption of the Heart is inexcusable, because it can proceed only from the Malice of the Heart; since the Rules by which it is to govern it self are so plain, that there is no room for Mistake; were it otherwise, the Law of God were not perfect. But as it is plain and manifest, so it is positive and express, what it enjoins as good, and inhibits as ill, must be done, or avoided, with all Preciseness and Punctuality; it admits no Considerations of Hazard, Conveniency, or Danger: They who presume that they may in the least degree decline the performing their Duty to God, or may be

dispensed with for not doing that which he hath enjoined them to do, in some Article of Time, when their Fortunes or their Lives are thereby endangered, or will be infallibly lost, (though that Conclusion can very hardly be made) have given their Vote for the present, that the Law of God is not so pure and perfect as it is declared to be. And truly it may be one of the saddest Considerations of the Folly, and Stupidity, and Wretchedness of the Heart of Man, to see when that Con-
 veniency of our Fortune, and even the precious Care of our Life (for it is no Argument that it is not very precious, because it may be over-
 valued) do concur with our Conscience, to restrain or dissuade us from breaking our Duty to God, in exposing that Life and Fortune in a Duel, to comply with the unreasonable Opinion and Censure of dissolute or fantastick Men; or in forfeiting that Life and Fortune by Treason and Rebellion, to satisfy some Humour of Pride, Revenge, or Ambition of our own; of how little Moment or Importance those Deliberations of Fortune and Life are, to keep us wise, honest, and virtuous: Yet when our Fear or Observation suggests to us, that these will come in question, by doing our Duty, or by not doing that which our Conscience is abundantly satisfied we ought not to do, we are ready to flatter our selves, that in such Cases the strait Rule of God's own Word may be bowed and brought to meet with our crooked Designs of good Husbandry and Security. When we ought to believe, that our Estates, which less Injustice may ravish from us, when we have satisfied the present Pressure, than that which puts us to these Stratagems, or which the Prodigality of a licentious Heir may quickly and infamously waste, cannot be so virtuously spent; and that our Life itself, which (if it escape the Rage and Fury that it now only fears) will at best be snatched shortly away from us, by a raging Fever, or a faint Consumption; cannot be so nobly lost, as for and in a severe Observance of the Precepts of God Almighty, and not receding a Tittle from what he hath enjoyn'd; and the Danger and the Loss ought to improve our Courage, and confirm our Innocence; and if we are once conscious of this just hearty Value of his Law, we should instantly feel such an unspeakable inward Comfort and Joy of Heart, that only the future Recompence and Reward of our Sufferings, would be greater than our present Satisfaction and Pleasure in those Sufferings.

We need not appeal to the Breasts of pious, virtuous, and conscientious Men alone, to know what that Joy of Heart is, which constantly attends the doing well, and to the utmost of our Power performing our Duty to God and Man; for our Duty to Man is a Part of the Law of God. There is no Man so ill, that cannot furnish us with some Evidence of that kind; tell us of some casual Good he hath done, or of some Enterprizes he hath been in, in which he hath been less wicked than other Men; from whence he hath found some Reluctance of Content and Quiet, that might be a Type of the Joy and Pleasure that proceeds from the Habit of a good Conscience: At least, if he hath forgotten all good Motions, which at some time or other have occurred from the Simplicity and Innocence of human Nature, and by the Custom and Love of Sin, suppressed the Delight that would grow from those Motions; yet he is able to tell us of a Perplexity and Agony of Mind which hath attended every enormous Crime, that will be Argument sufficient, that contrary Effects proceed from contrary Causes. If the adulterous and lustful Person would seriously revolve, and as

faithfully communicate the Pangs and Pricks of his Morning Thoughts and Apprehensions, they would be enough to quench all others Appetite but his own, to those dark and Evening Exercises: And if the rebellious, bloody Wretch, would ingenuously confess the Horror and Desperation of Soul he sometimes endures, upon the Review and Recollection of the precious Blood he hath spilt, it may be there could not be a more lively Representation of that Hell which expects him. On the contrary, they whom God hath vouchsafed to endue with Grace enough heartily to love and desire to do well, do find so refreshing and comfortable a Delight even from that very Appetite, that all the Wealth and Delicacies of the World, and the Content which they administer, is dull and insipid, and even nauseous in respect of the other. That charitable Man, who hath had the Power and Opportunity seasonably to oblige it may be to preserve by his Counsel, and Interest, and Bounty, a worthy and a virtuous Person, (for though the Exercise of Charity be very necessary and pleasant towards all Men how unworthy soever yet the Worthiness of the Object infinitely increases the Satisfaction and Pleasure) hath found so wonderful and unexpressible a Joy and Comfort in it, that the Person himself preserved, though from Famine or a more lingering and tormenting Death, cannot, by what he feels in any Degree comprehend; and it may be an Age of that Repose, and Ease, and Joy, which the Heart in such a blessed Conjunction feels and is ravished with, (and it is a natural Exercise of the Mind, to extend the real Pleasure of a Day to the Compass of an Age, and indeed by the Repetition of the same Virtue with the same Circumstances will last so long) is the most lively and pregnant Instance of the Joys of Heaven, that the Sense and Understanding of a Man is capable of, since it so feelingly exceeds all others that can be imagined. If this Joy of Heart, in having done our Duty, were but seriously weighed and considered, according to the Testimony every Man can give himself upon the more or less innocent Passages of his Life, it would work in us a Contempt of that adulterate Joy and Pleasure we find in the vulgar and ordinary Road of Affections and Appetite.

GOOD God, prepare us to a devout and reverent Esteem and Regard of thy Power, and thy Glory, by a Contemplation of the wonderful Works of thy Creation, the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, all formed and framed by thee, for the Service, Use and Comfort of thy poor Creature Man; and of thy incomparable Goodness in vouchsafing to oblige him only to the Observation of such a Law, as by its Perfection, and Wisdom, and Justice, supplies all those who submit to it, with all the Wealth, and Joy, and Pleasure, the Heart of Man can desire. Give us thy Grace, O merciful Father, that we may set our whole Hearts upon this thy Law, and prefer it before all the worldly Wealth and Pleasure which would corrupt us: And when thou hast infused in us this gracious Disposition to love and obey thee, and to observe thy Commandments, free us from any secret and inward Corruptions, from any Suggestions of Pride or Vanity, from the Opinion of our own Uprightness; but let us at the same time feel the Comfort of doing our Duty, together with Pity and Compassion towards those, who for want of thy Spirit do amiss; and let us have no Words or Thoughts, but such as are acceptable in thy Sight. Amen.

P S A L M

P S A L M XX.

THOUGH the united Prayers of other Men can never make us happy without our own particular Devotion, our own Religion and Piety must first make us fit, at least capable of God's Blessing, before the Prayers of others, how just and faithful Persons soever, can draw it down upon us; yet we shall much over-value our own Devotion when it is at best, if we believe that we have not need of the Prayers of other Men, or that we shall not prosper much the better for their Prayers, who pour them out religiously before God on our behalf. Those are the mutual Offices all Christians are bound to do for each other, and all can do for each other on equal Terms: The greatest King is relieved by the Prayers of his meanest Subject, and thinks that Prayer as valuable to him, as his who pays him the greatest Subsidies: And therefore, not only Christianity, but whatever Exercise of Religion hath been practised before the Christian was planted amongst any People reduced under a Civil Government, hath taken care for Offices of that kind, that Prayer and Devotion should be offered by all, for all those to whom they wished their God should be propitious; and in the first Institution of Christian Liturgies, no Office was more precisely provided for: And if each particular Recommendation of us, in the pious Exercises of every good Man, be of that Moment and Importance, of how much more Value must the Prayer of the Church be? The Church which God hath trusted with a kind of Administration, and a Power to confer his Blessings and Judgments, cannot pray ineffectually, nor those be long unprosperous, for whom she poureth out her Prayers. Nor is this Jurisdiction of Prayer only intrusted or allowed to the general Universal Church, but to every National Church; nay, the faithful Prayers of every lawful Congregation, hath been always looked upon with great Reverence and Comfort: And therefore, not only the publick Blessings and Concernments of every Kingdom and State, as the Prosperity and Health of the King and the Principal Governors, and the Peace, and War, and Necessities of the People, is a part of the Duty and Devotion of those Congregations; but very frequently the Sickneſs, or sad Condition of private and particular Persons, are recommended to the powerful Mediation of those pious, lawful Assemblies; since God vouchsafes often with more Indulgence to hearken to those concurrent Intercessions.

Indeed, the King or Kingdom is very seldom unprosperous, never unfortunate, whilst the Church continues united in her Devotions and Intercessions; till her Harmony be broken or divided, the Civil Peace can hardly be interrupted, at least not powerfully disturbed: Whilst the Church takes the Safety and Honour of the King to Heart, and Churchmen teach the People Obedience to lawful Authority, as a fundamental Part of their Religion, and their Reverence to the sacred Person of their King, as to the Deputy of God Almighty; and of whose Person he is so jealous as his Substitute, that any Disrespect to him shall be interpreted as a Neglect and Affront to the Majesty of God himself: Whilst they pray for him with that Confidence in his Piety, and that Submission to his Wisdom, that they know not better to express themselves

selves in their Petitions on his Behalf, than that God will grant him his own Hearts Desire, and accomplish those Petitions which he shall make to him for himself; the People very rarely decline from the Accomplishment of their Duty, and the King very seldom misses such a Measure of God's Blessing as makes King, and Church, and People, jointly and severally very fortunate. But when the Church is disunited, and broken into Schisms, and Churchmen entertain that horrible Sacrilege in their Hearts, of Hope to thrive and prosper by the Ruin of the Church; and instead of blessing the King, and praying that God will hear his Prayers, and grant his Requests, reduce all their Devotions and Addresses to God Almighty, into Curses and Detractions, and Calumnies upon the King, into Prayers against his Prayers, and that he may never find his Hearts Desire, or have any of his Petitions granted, but instead thereof, that the Councils of his Enemies may prosper, and all their wicked Imaginations against him may be brought to pass; when Rebellion against the King is preached, as necessary to advance Religion and the Service of God, and Sacrilege taught as the best Means to promote the Glory of God: It is no wonder if the Hearts and Affections of the People be at once corrupted towards God and the King; and his Divine Majesty become so incensed against such Impiety, Wickedness, and Prophaneness, that out of Indignation to Priest and People, and to bring them to Confusion and Ruin, he permits his heavy Judgments to fall upon the Prince too, how virtuous and pious soever, that so the whole Nation may be overwhelmed with that full Misery they have deserved.

MOST gracious Father, take into thy immediate and powerful Protection, (we beseech thee) the Person and sad Condition of thy Servant our King, and bear him in this Day of his Trouble, and hear all those who faithfully pray to thee on his Behalf; remember thy Care and Kindness to thy Servant of Old, and repeat over those thy Works of Goodness and Mercy to him, and for his Establishment: Remember all his Prayers, and the Prayers, and Sighs, and Tears his Father poured out to thee; and accept that bloody Sacrifice that glorious Saint, now at thy Right Hand, offered for the Manifestation of his Conscience and Duty to thee, and of his Confidence in thee; and let it satisfy thy Anger and Justice, and withhold thy Hand from laying more Afflictions and Calamities upon that unhappy Family. Restore and unite that miserable Church of that poor Nation, to a due Sense of thy heavy Judgments thou hast of late Years laid upon it; and to that Devotion for their King, as may make him and them acceptable to thee, and then to that Peace and Security that belongs to all. Disappoint and reduce to confound all those who have declined thy Precepts, and all Fear of thee, and put their whole Confidence in that wicked Strength and Power thou hast at this Time given them Leave to be possessed of. Save the King by the Strength of thy own Right Hand, by some such unexpected Way and Means, as may be to all the World a Evidence of thy extraordinary Grace and Favour to him: And that he may see how vain all other Dependances are, but upon thee, and his Obedience to thee, give him Grace to set his whole Heart upon thee, and then grant him his Hearts Desire, and fulfil what he shall ask.

of thee: *All this for thy Son's Sake, and for what he hath suffered for us all. Amen.*

P S A L M XXI.

AS no Prayer or Devotion is more acceptable to God Almighty, than that which is offered by faithful and obedient Subjects, for the Health and Prosperity of their Princes, and no Concurrence of the Church it self of more Power with him, than when it intercedes for, and even pronounces his Blessings upon their Pious and Religious Kings; so no worldly Joy is comparable to what the Hearts of honest Subjects feel, when it pleases God to vouchsafe a Signal Victory to their King, over his Rebellious Enemies; and is some Resemblance of that Delight with which the Angels in Heaven were filled, upon the Triumph of our Saviour over Death, the World, and the Devil; and it is no wonder that the Joy should be great and general, when the Benefit is universal. When God gives Deliverance to the King, he gives Security to all the People, and therefore they have Reason to be very glad: Whenever God intends to make a Nation signally happy, he begins his Blessings upon them with some peculiar Favour to the King; he gives him Victory, and Wealth, and Love of Justice, and Length of Days, and Reputation and Fame after his Death, which is the Immortality of this World; and to the People, he gives Hearts full of Love, and Duty, and Reverence towards him, and such as find no Joy equal to that which attends the Prosperity and Success of their King. This Harmony and Gratitude of their Affections (which is but a due Sense of God's Blessing upon themselves) is very powerful with his Divine Majesty, and keeps him from being weary of showering down his Favours upon that Land; he breaks the Power and Strength of all Rebellious Combinations which would disturb their Peace; and when they fly the Justice of their Prince which pursues them, he meets them with his own Judgments, and makes them Instruments of one anothers Destruction, and roots out their Names and Memories from the Earth.

It is an infallible Sign of great Calamity to a Nation, when the People thereof have not a true Delight in those publick Concernments, when there is not that Sympathy of Affections, that Subjects are even transported with Joy at the Prosperity and Victory of their Princes. When the Sins are National which draw down God's Judgments upon us, the Sadness and Repentance of a few will do no good; it must be as general a Sorrow and Recognition that must expiate. The same Order must be observed in the Reception of publick Blessings; and no Blessings more Publick, or of a more publick Consequence, than good Success to Kings in their Undertakings, and therefore the Joy and Delight must be Universal; and if that Acknowledgment be wanting, God is defrauded of his Due. He does not more love an humble and a broken Heart under Affliction, than he does a merry and exalted Heart upon his Blessings and Deliverances. Seasonable Joy is as proper a Sacrifice to the Almighty, as Tears, and Sighs, and Sobs can be; and the suppressing the one, is as bad as not pouring out the other. * *We do not well, this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace; if we*

5 R

tarry

* 2 Kings vii. 9.

tarry till the morning-light, some mischief will come upon us; now therefore come, that we may go and tell the King's Household; was the chearful Consultation and Conclusion of those poor Men, who first discovered that the King and City were free from the Army of the Syrians; when they might have spent their Time more to their own particular Advantages, by a discreet Reservation, and not yet communicated that Argument of publick Joy; but they knew they had not done well then, and that it had been little better than Sacrilege, to defraud those of the present Notice, to whom God bequeathed the Benefit: And they who have the Notice of such great Deliverances and Victories, and do not enlarge their Hearts with a proportionable Joy and Acknowledgment, defraud God no less of somewhat he expects from them; he loves a chearful, as well as a broken Heart.

God only knows, whether we have more incensed him with our Repinings and Murmurings in our Distresses and Defeats, when the Enemy hath prevailed against us, or in our Defect of true and general Joy and Comfort, when he hath sometimes been pleased to give Victory to his Anointed: Whether we have not been sometimes afraid of Victory, out of an unreasonable Jealousy of the Benefit of Success; and never proposed to our selves good and charitable Ends in it, till we were removed a great Distance from it: Whether when we have desired that a Crown of pure Gold might be set on the King's Head, that he might have Power and Riches enough to gratify us, and to satisfy our Ambitions, we had that just Regard of his Honour and Reverence, and Submission to his Majesty, as we ought to have. And if we are in Truth guilty of these Defects and Distempers, we can blame no body but ourselves, that we have no more Arguments for Songs of Victory and Triumph, and are only exercised in woful Dirges and Lamentations.

GOOD God, who hast made a Time to rejoice, as well as a Time to weep in; and art no less pleased with Sacrifices of Thanksgiving, than of Prayers: Look down upon our Miseries and Distresses, and remember how long we have been without any Victory upon our Enemies. If in the time thou didst vouchsafe those Blessings sometimes to us, we had not that value of them they deserved, and thereby made our selves unworthy of more; we have suffered grievously for these our Oversights and Transgressions: However, let not thy Servant the King suffer for our Defects and Misdoings; but refresh his tender Tears with some Victory over his Enemies, that he may feel thy Loving-kindness, and find Joy in thy Protection. Prevent him with Deliverances and Blessings, that he hath not yet the Confidence to look for; and set his Father's Crown upon his Head. Find out all his open and secret Enemies, those who would not that he should reign over them, and those who would have him only reign to their Benefit and Advantage, without considering the Glory, and Honour, and Majesty which thou hast laid upon him; and let thy Wrath swallow them up, and the Heat thereof devour them; let them die without Children, and let not their Posterity be known: But, O Lord, preserve thou the King, and upon his Head let the Crown flourish. Amen.

PSALM XXII.

O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their Enemies? and what wilt thou do to thy great Name? *? was the passionate Ejaculation from the broken Spirit of Joshua, when his Soldiers were beaten, and fled before the Men of Ai. If those who had felt so many Miracles of God's Mercies, and were the peculiar People whom he professed to love, should be driven back, and oppressed by a Nation which knew not, at least cared not for his Name and his Religion, Joshua could not see how God's own Honour could be preserved. And from this Jealousy and Apprehension proceeds all the Passion and Impatience which good and pious Men express in great Calamities. When they who have made Lies their Refuge, and looked upon Integrity and Truth in Words or Actions, as Badges of Folly, do prevail so far, as to overcome and trample upon all who observe the Dictates of Virtue and Conscience, which are the Dictates of God; the good Man's Agony is principally compounded of Fear that this Success may have too great an Influence upon the Spirits of Men, to restrain them from the Observation and Pursuit of those severe Rules, which render the Followers of them liable to such signal Misfortunes; and so, that in the unhappy Fate of pious and religious Men, Religion and Piety itself may receive some Prejudice. † *Oh, my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his Miracles which our Fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites,* will be a current receiv'd Way of Reasoning to the Worlds end, as well as it was in the Time of Gideon. There will be always too many who will ask, Why have they lost this Battel? and why have their Enemies Power to destroy them, if their Cause be so good? And even question God's own Providence, by what he suffers his Children to undergo. It is very possible, that the Knowledge of this perverse Nature of Man in arguing, produced some of those Expressions of Impatience in our Saviour himself, at the Time of his bitter Passion; (besides that he would after the Manner of Men, manifest his sharp Sense of the Pain he endured as Man, and for Man,) that he saw, that too many would be apt to believe that God could not, because he did not help him; and that he could not be the Son of God, whom the Father suffered to be exposed to such variety of Contempt and Torments.

It is very strange, that Men who pretend to be Christians, and have no other Title to hope well for themselves than from the very Sufferings of Christ, should have so wonderful a Prejudice to all Men that suffer; and make that an infallible Argument of God's being angry with them, when none ever did, or ever shall suffer the hundredth Part in this World, of what his own most dearly beloved Son did undergo. Why should we think him at too great a Distance to help us, when he was once even out of the Cry of our Saviour? Why should we take it so much to Heart to be objected to the Pride, and Scorn, and Contempt of wicked and rebellious Men, when Christ himself, the Glory and Delight of him

2

who

* Joshua vii. 8, 9.

† Judges vi. 13.

who made and governs the World, was trod upon as the vilest Worm upon the Earth, put into the Scales with Thieves and Murtherers, and over-weighed by them; objected to the Insolence of the Judges, and (which other Men in Misery seldom find) the universal Uncharitableness of all the Auditors and Spectators, with all the Circumstances and Gestures of Scorn and Reproach imaginable? Are we oppressed, taken and imprisoned by the Power and Fury of revengeful and merciless Enemies, who, after our Wounds and Torments, will not be satisfied without taking our Lives from us? The Son of God met with Enemies void of all human Affections; in Strength, comparable to the strongest Beasts; and in Savageness, superior to the most cruel; who did not shed his Blood at the Orifice of little Wounds and Scars, but poured it out like Water; broke the precious Fabrick of his Body into pieces, and with the Torment thereof, melted his compassionate Heart like Wax; made every Article of his Sufferings so exquisitely full of Anguish, that even they who resist the devout Consideration of the Cause and End of his Passion, cannot yet compose their Faculties of Sense, at the hearing the History of his terrible Agony. We all acknowledge, we should endeavour to make our selves as like him as we can: We may in a Degree resemble him, if we suffer for observing his Precepts; and for so doing, we have one Encouragement he was without, and in a Circumstance very acceptable to our Nature, that it is very possible, oftentimes very probable, that we may outlive the Rage of our Enemies, and see them brought to Confusion in this World, which he was sure he was not to do: However, we know we shall have that Part of his Reward, of triumphing over them in a blessed and delightful Resurrection; a Triumph, in which we shall have all the Glory, and none of the Pride, all the good Fortune, and none of the Faults of a Conqueror.

A good Christian's Life in this World is a continual Warfare, subject to all the Skirmishes, and Assaults, and Ambushes, that a dextrous and a vigilant Enemy can subject us to; and if we would, in the Managery of it, be indulgent to some of those Propositions and Principles of Honour, which are current in the carrying on of all Wars, we should with more Alacrity go through the Dangers and Distresses which occur to us. Places of Danger are so much affected in all difficult and hazardous Enterprizes, that it is the greatest Instance of Favour, to be preferred to those Conducts, in which the General engages his only Son, ambitious of the Honour, and careless of the Insecurity, and looks upon the Wounds, and Scars, and Maims he returns with, as Trophies of the War. It is great pity that we do not the same in the other War too, and believe the Crosses and Interruptions we meet in the Pursuit of our Designs, (how noble and just soever) the Afflictions and Calamities we undergo in the Exercise of our Duty, to be those Scars which make us beautiful, and those Maims which declare us the boldest Soldiers, and fittest to march under his Banner whom we profess to serve.

MY God, my God, thou hast stood a long time far from helping us, and hast been long silent to the Voice of our Prayer; thou seest how our Integrity is contemned and laughed at, because we want Power to support and defend our Innocence; and thou best knowest how thy own Providence is profaned in the Hearts of our cruel Enemies. Do with us what seemeth best in thy own Eyes; and if

our Ruin in this World be necessary to thy Service, thy Will be done, but save our precious Souls for his Sake, &c.

P S A L M XXIII.

*I*F the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would at this time have told us such things as these*, was the Argumentation of Manoah's Wife, against the Fear and Diffidence of her Husband; and might very well have become the more Masculine Understanding. God Almighty will be very well pleased, if we have so much Confidence and Faith in him, as in all our Perplexities, when our Understandings are puzzled, and in all our Distresses, when our Spirits are fainting, to use that kind of Logick to support us. If he hath at any time redeemed us from pressing or languishing Wants and Necessities, and supplied us beyond our Hope, at least beyond our Expectation, by the Charity of Friends, Compassion of Strangers, or some such other seeming Casualties as he usually transmits his Favours by, in such a Manner, as we have found our selves for a time at ease, and in a Degree of Plenty (and it may be, there be few Men so miserable, who have not enjoyed such Intervals): If he hath at any time rescued us from a devouring Danger, when our Enemies were so near taking our Lives from us, that we had Death in our Prospect, and by our sensible Fear, even undergone some Impressions of it: And God knows how many there are, who have been Instances of those articulate Deliverances): We may very well argue, that if he were resolved to destroy us, he would not have conferred those Graces, and Favours, and Deliverances upon us. Nay, if he hath given us so much Grace, as to rely upon, and put our Trust in him; to pray heartily unto him, and to preserve our selves from the Infection and Contagion of prevailing and prosperous Wickedness: If in a Time of powerful and successful Rebellion, we have, out of the Conscience of our Duty to him, kept our Allegiance to our King, and been as loyal to an unfortunate and oppressed Prince, as we could, and others would have been in his full Glory: If when Sacrilege and Prophaneness have broke upon his Religion and Worship, dividing and sharing the Spoils of his Temple amongst all those who would concur with them in their impious Attempts, we have, for Piety sake, to our utmost Power, and with our utmost Hazard, opposed their desperate Fury, and never consented to their Wickedness, when we were no longer able to stop the Progress of it: If in a Time of Persecution, when Mens Lives and Fortunes were with all imaginable Rigor and Severity taken from them, for not consenting to Perjury, and other Violations of their Conscience, and both Lives and Fortunes might be preserved by submitting to those Impositions; we have passed through the Fire of that Persecution, and chosen Imprisonment, or Banishment, or Death, rather than we would comply with that Power to the Breach of our Duty: We may very well expect some signal Deliverance upon that Conclusion, That if God meant we should be destroyed, *he would not have received those burnt-offerings, nor those meat-offerings at our hands; he would not have gi-*

* Judges xiii. 23.

ven us the Courage to have sacrificed our Conveniencies, and Estates and Lives to his Service.

*M*erciful God, thou art our Shepherd, and we are thy Flock, thou hast created us, thou hast redeemed us; thou hast often supplied in our greatest Wants, and as often preserved us in our greatest Dangers; thou hast given us Grace to rely upon thee, and to suffer for thee: O let not all those Instances of thy fatherly Goodness be lost and forgotten in our Destruction: Lead us once more through the Valley of the Shadow of Death; and let us once more lie down in the green Pasture, enjoy the Peace and the Plenty again of our own Country, that we may magnify thy Name, and praise thee in thy own House the Remainder of our Days. Amen.

P S A L M XXIV.

*M*y Son, prove thy soul in thy life, and see what is evil for it, and give not that unto it *, is the Counsel of the Son of Syrach. And when God himself vouchsafes, like a good and learned Physician to prescribe the Diet that this precious Soul is to observe, if it intends Health and Salvation, we are to thank our selves, if breaking those plain Rules with our Excess and Disorder, we are disappointed of the Joy and Comfort which it was in our Power to have enjoyed. Almighty God, the Emperor and Proprietor of the whole World, condescends himself to keep those Orders towards us, which our Observation and Experience amongst Men hath taught us to be most just and equal; for as those Kings and Princes to whom he hath assigned the Government of Nations as his Deputies, do enact Laws and Constitutions, by which their Subjects may know their Duties, and so have it in their own Power to be innocent and secure, and discern what Exercise of Virtue will render them gracious to their Princes, and the Practice of what Vices is incapable of their Favour: So the supreme Monarch of the World hath published his Laws too, by which all his Subjects are to live, and without the transgressing of which, they can incur no Danger or Punishment; and by the Obedience whereunto, they are sure of Place and Preferment in his highest Court, which no Integrity can assure a Man from those other Princes. And therefore, as we would hold that Man mad, who would pretend to be of the King's Bedchamber, and at the same time refuse to take an Oath of Subjection and Allegiance to him, and profess that he will lay hold of the first Opportunity to betray him: So we must conclude that Man as sottish, and void of Understanding as well as Piety, who pretends to a Place in the higher Court, and at the same time resolves not to be, at least, for the present, is not either just or pious, or humble, or true; every one of which is a Condition inseparable from that Preferment he proposes to himself to obtain.

Qui non accepit in vano animam suam, says the vulgar *Latin*: He that hath not taken his Soul in vain, looked upon it as somewhat he was not to account for, or as somewhat that was given or lent him, only to help the Body to take the fuller Delight and Pleasure in the Vanity, and Luxury, and Ambition of the World; indeed, they who are so indulgent

to their Passions or Affections, as to think that any part of their Happiness consists in the satisfying of, or complying with those insatiable, corrupt, and tyrannical Companions; *acceperunt in vano animam suam*, have received a Soul from God Almighty to no Purpose; not to the Purpose he gave it, and therefore cannot expect that he will take it again, after they have so used and spoiled it: Whereas those, who value this Jewel aright, and intend to return it to him who entrusted them with it, cannot but be entire in their Actions, upright and charitable in their Thoughts and Purposes, humble and active in doing their Duty, and precise Lovers of Truth in all they think, say, or do; and then they are so well qualified to inhabit the City of the Lord, that the Gates of Heaven shall be as open to them, and the Angels as ready to receive them, as they were the King of Glory himself, who hath prepared that Welcome, and directed that Triumph, for the Generation which shall in this Manner seek him, and follow his Example, and observe his Precepts.

GRACIOUS Father, we are thy Creatures, and inhabit the Earth which thou hast created, with no other Joy, than as it is the Highway through which thou hast appointed us to make our Journey to the Heavenly Habitation; cleanse our Hands, and purify our Hearts with that Integrity and Devotion to thee, that our Souls may be fit to be received by thee, whatever Calamities thou hast appointed us in our Bodies to undergo. Amen.

P S A L M XXV.

THERE is no Man so compleatly wicked, that is not sometimes at his Prayers; Accidents in Health, or Distresses in Fortune, will now and then extort some Ejaculations of Piety towards God Almighty, somewhat that is like Devotion, and a Submission to his Providence; but then it is at best but a Fit of Religion, an Excess of his Passion, and Impatience, and Confusion, as not knowing what to do; nor any Result from the sober Considerations of the Heart and Soul; he uses his Prayers as a Charm or a Spell, presently to drive away some Inconvenience which he sees approaching towards him, or to draw some Advantage to him, which he stands in Need of; and if they do not instantly work the Effect he looks for, he grows weary, and even ashamed of them, as dull and remote Remedies, and resorts to the more active Inventions of his own Brain; the more natural Support of Friends, and Persons in Power and Authority, how unjust and wicked soever, or how wickedly soever their Authority hath been obtained; and from thenceforth hath the worse Opinion of God, for having suffered him to pray in vain to him. But it is quite otherwise with the pious and the devout Christian, who having really and in Truth put his entire Confidence in God, is never weary or ashamed of that Confidence. If he finds that his Prayers are not so graciously heard, as that he receives all that he hath prayed for, he receives yet an unspeakable Comfort, and sensible Refreshment, by having done as he ought to do, by having performed his Part; and though he prospers not as he would, if he prays as he should, he hath made a good Progress towards his own Deliv-

Deliverance; and hath raised a good Fortification against the Sharpness, at least, and Importunity of any Affliction that invades him: He may be still besieged by his Distresses, Relief and Supply may be kept from him, but he will not be undermined, blown up by his own Despair, nor stormed, frightened out of his Innocence, by the Promises, or Threats, or Tyranny of his proud Oppressors.

As there cannot be a more impious Thing, more unagreeable to the Principles of Christianity, so there cannot be a more irrational, and a more sottish Thing, than to slacken our Devotions, to lessen our Confidence in God, upon the violent Success of ill Men, and upon the Accumulation of Miseries and Calamities upon us. We do not believe that we may repine against the King, if Robbers assault and pillage us in his Highway, or Thieves break into our Houses and steal our Goods from us; and yet he hath a kind of Obligation by his Providence and Severity, to provide for our Ease, and Quiet, and Security: Nor do we think it lawful to lessen our Duty and Allegiance to him, if we are publicly and violently oppressed by some great Man, who by his Credit, and Wealth, and Power, is able to obstruct the Course of Justice towards us; and yet it is his Part to open all those Obstructions, and to suppress all those Oppressors: How come we then to be so bold with God Almighty, as to murmur against him, if any Damage or Inconvenience steal upon us, though called in, or let in by our own Default or Vanity, or Incogitancy; or to rebel against him (for to apply ourselves to, or rely upon any other Help, is direct Rebellion against him) when the Injustice and Malice of our Enemies, hath obtained prosperous and continued Success against us? The Times and Seasons for our Devotions and Prayers, and Applications, are without the least Scruple of Doubt clearly known to us; let us not fail in that which we are sure is our Duty. The Time and Season in which his Power must operate for our Deliverance, is not prescribed, possibly not known to himself, for he will do it sooner or later, as we make our selves more or less fit for his Mercy: Let us not labour impatiently to gather that Fruit, before it be ripe for us; it is Comfort enough to know that the Time will come, and that it can be only hastened by the Innocency of our Life, and the Fervency of our Devotion.

There hath been no Man yet so mad, as to conceive that an Ague or Fever, or any other Bodily Sickness is Cause enough, or Excuse to distrust God's Favour to him; and yet there is much more Colour of Reason to suspect his Goodness then, than under the Exercise of any worldly Cross; for besides that Health is a much greater Blessing than any worldly Prosperity can be, so much greater, that the most worldly Man feels no Pleasure in the latter without the former; the most virtuous and innocent Mind, is not able to administer Ease and Quiet to itself in those bodily Contentions and Indispositions; as no Tranquility of Conscience can lessen the Drought in a Fever, or restrain the Pangs of a Convulsion; whereas the other Pressures of Fortune are always allayed, and by degrees eluded by the Steadiness and Courage, and Innocence of a pious and religious Disposition; and therefore if we can find Patience in the one, we may be well ashamed to want it in the other.

When the godly Man finds himself in great Tribulation, he knows there are many Things to be obtained by his Prayers, before he proposes a Deliverance; he is first to procure a Pardon for his own Sins, which

which were the Forerunners of his Punishment; first to get God to forget what he hath done amiss, before he can look that he will remember what he suffers by so doing: If he be not so merciful, as to forget what we our selves have done, it will do us little good, that he remembers what others have done to us. Then if he hath an humble Conscience of any pious Thoughts towards his God, and of a dutiful Confidence in him, his next Suit is, that he will support and cherish that Confidence and Dependance upon his Providence, and so the Time of his Deliverance will not much perplex him. If we can be sure to fix our Eyes steddily upon God, resolve to the utmost of our Power, (for no more is looked for from us, than is in our Power to perform) to live as he hath commanded us; or so to fix our Eyes upon him, as to expect our Deliverance from some Act of his immediate Power and Influence; how long soever that Deliverance is coming, we shall have always some such Rays of Comfort from the Reflex of that beautiful Prospect, that we shall neither grow faint with our own Miseries, nor impatient at the Success of God's and our Enemies.

Gracious God, we do with all Meekness and Humility, lift up our Hearts and our Souls to thee, repose our entire Trust and Confidence in thee, and in thy Protection and Deliverance. O let us never faint or droop in that Confidence; or give other Men Occasion, by an odious Apostacy, or declining the Ways thou hast commanded us to walk in, to believe that we are ashamed of having relied upon thee. Forget those crying Sins of ours, which first withdrew thy Favour from us, and then opened a Gap for our cruel Enemies to break in upon us; bury those Sins in the Grave of thy Son, and remember only the Mercy that he hath purchased for us: Behold and consider, how by the Prosperity and Power of our Enemies, our Miseries are improved; how far they are from using Mercy, or repenting of their Wickedness; therefore look thou upon our Sufferings, and redress our Wrongs: Let not the Multitude of our Enemies overwhelm us, nor their Hatred and Malice destroy us; though we are weak, thou art strong, and canst bring their swollen Pride and Tyranny to Confusion in a Moment. How great soever our Sins are towards thee, yet they persecute us not for those Sins, but for our Integrity and Uprightness, for those Actions, which, according to our weak Power, we have performed in Obedience to thee; and therefore support that Integrity and Uprightness, how imperfect soever it is, and give us Grace patiently to wait thy own Time for our full Deliverance, and for the Redemption of all those who suffer for Conscience Sake. Amen.

PSALM XXVI.

THough the greatest Innocence and Uprightness we can hope to attain in this World, is, in the Presence of God, and with Reference to our Duty to him, pure Corruption and Guilt; yet our Case may be such, and the Circumstances such, that we may confidently approach God Almighty upon the Stock of our Integrity, and insist upon this Innocence and Uprightness, (how tainted soever) even in our

Prayers to him for a Deliverance. When any Judgment of his is upon us for our Sins, (and without those we should be free from all his Judgments) to think that all our Virtue and Simplicity hath the Weight of a Drachm, towards the turning of the Scale of his Justice, is a Presumption inconsistent with Christian Religion; but we may be so traduced and calumniated, and persecuted by Men, and be so free and innocent from those Slanders and Calumnies, and in respect of those unjust Persons, that we may modestly enough appeal to the Throne of God's Judgment, and promise our selves a Vindication from his Justice, for our own Righteousness Sake. When we are overborn by the Malice and Injustice of cruel and merciless Enemies, and by their Tyranny debarred the Protection of those Laws, which should examine, and manifest our Innocence; and are by their extravagant and usurped Power, declared to be Enemies to our Country, and persecuted as such; we may well and piously betake our selves to the Justice of God Almighty, upon the Account of our Integrity, and reasonably believe that he will not suffer us to perish, because we have walked innocently. When we are by the Falshood and Artifice of rebellious and profane Persons, accused of evil Thoughts towards the Peace and Happiness of our Country, and evil Inclinations towards the Purity and Propagation of Religion, and the Worship of God, we may piously beseech him, (whose uncommunicated Prerogative it is, to discern clearly the Thoughts and Inclinations of all Hearts) that he will to the utmost examine and try the most secret Thoughts of our Hearts, being such as have proceeded from the entire Love of him and his Truth; and since the Malice nor Curiosity of our proud Enemies is not sharp-sighted enough to see our Hearts, that he will by his Power vouchsafe to manifest the Uprightness of our Thoughts, and to render even our Hearts transparent to them, that so we may be freed from those odious Imputations, which possibly may make Impressions upon the Minds of honest and good Men.

If we may without Vanity or Presumption treat thus with God himself in our Devotions, with an humble Remonstrance and Confidence of our Integrity, how much more warrantable is the publick Profession and Declaration of that Innocence and Integrity, in Opposition of, and Vindication of our selves from the false Imputations, and uncharitable Aspersions, which the Malice of our cruel Enemies think necessary to lay upon us, as if they hoped in some Degree, to make their horrible Proceedings against us appear just, by making us appear such infamous Persons, that we could not expect any regular and formal Proceeding of Justice against us? We may, without over-magnifying our selves, tell these Men, and tell the World, that their Exception against us, in respect of our Affection to our Country, is no other than that we would not join with their Faction, nor concur with their Hypocrisy, to rob it of the Peace and Happiness it had long, and long might have enjoyed; and that their Quarrel to us in the Point of Religion, is no other, than that we love the Habitation of the House of the Lord, and the Place where his Honour dwelleth; that we abhor Sacrilege, and will not consent to the profaning the Place of his Worship; that we loved to wash our Hands in Innocence, and then to compass his Altar; desired to perform those Ceremonies, and observe those decent Circumstances in our Devotion, which either himself enjoined, or his Church commanded, for the more reverent setting out, and adorning his Service; and upon

upon this Issue expect the Testimony and Approbation of good Men, as well as we feel that of our own Conscience.

This being our Case, we may lawfully pray and hope, that God will put a Difference between us and our Enemies; between us, who are persecuted for observing and obeying his Precepts, and those who neglected and contemned those Precepts, before they could persecute us, and that we may not be exposed to one and the same Fate. That we, whose Blood hath been spilt in Defence of what is most precious to him, and they who have shed our Blood like Water, in their Pride and Wantonness; we who have loved Justice, and have suffered for it, and they who have doted upon Bribery and Corruption, and have prospered by it, may not find the same Measure from the Severity of his Judgment, though it may be we have other Sins, which have provoked as much as those in which we are exceeded by our Enemies.

Merciful Father, Give us Leave in this our heavy Affliction and terrible Persecution, to appeal to thy own Judgment for Protection and Justice against those Adversaries, who with Rage and Cruelty pursue us: Thou knowest, that by thy Grace, we have guided our selves by the Rules thou hast prescribed to us; and in our Carriage towards them, have not swerved from thy Commandments: Thou knowest the Uprightness of our Hearts in the Matters laid to our Charge; vouchsafe to manifest and declare our Innocence to the World in such a Manner, as that they who are out of the Way may return to thee. Give us Grace in this our Banishment, to be so sensible of no Restraint or Distress that is upon us, as of being shut out from that Habitation of thine, thy Church, and from the Exercise of thy Religion in that Place of thy Worship; or rather for the Impiety, and Profaneness, and Sacrilege, that is offered to that thy House. Good God, in that thy own Cause, (whatsoever Judgments our Sins shall draw upon our selves) stretch out thy own Arm, and blast and destroy those Locusts, who desire to destroy thy Vineyard; and if we are not too unworthy of that blessed Day, let us again bless thy Name in the pious Congregations of our own Country. Amen.

P S A L M XXVII.

WE are very apt to think our selves secure from the Danger and Power of an Enemy, when we are gotten into a strong Fort or Castle, it may be by Rebellion, and when we keep that Castle against our Prince, or the lawful Owner of it, satisfying our selves upon the Fortification of the Place, even against the Assaults of our own Conscience. And we are very apt to believe our selves secure against the Oppression of a powerful Neighbour, it may be against the very Justice of the Law it self, and the Government of the State we live in, and should submit to, when we get into the Protection of some great Person, though it be such a one, as thereby only manifests his Power to do Wrong; if he be able to resist and defend us from those we are afraid of, how just soever our Fear is, we think we have Security enough. It is at best a wonderful Incogitancy, if it be not a desperate undervaluing of

of the Justice and Power of God Almighty, to imagine that we can be as safe under any mortal Protection, as under his Power; and that it is possible for any Man to defend us when we do Wrong, and swerve from our Duty; and that God cannot, or will not shelter and preserve us when we fly to him, and carry that Innocence with us, which was never unacceptable to him, nor deserted by him. Indeed it is an easier Matter to insinuate our selves into the Favour, and consequently to obtain the Protection of a powerful Person, than to make our selves worthy to be considered and relieved by that Providence which will not consider us if we be unworthy. We are sure, by complying with the Weakness and Wickedness of the former, not to want his Indulgence by serving his Appetite, to prevail over his Affections, and by sharing with him in his Guilt, to divide with him in his Power; and therefore it is no great Wonder that we incline to this pleasant Subjection, where we may be wicked and safe at one, commit any Trespas without the Fear of any Punishment.

But as this is a very sad Security and Protection in respect of the other, both in the shortness of the Time we can enjoy it, and the inward Pleasure in it, even during the short Time we have it: So the Conditions and Obligations of the other are very different. We must not only renounce and abhor the least kind of Delight in what is simply evil, restrain our Affections from the Pride, and Vanity, and Ambition, and Injustice that is practised in the World, and oblige them to that severe Love of Virtue, that may preserve us entirely innocent; but we must divest our selves of too much Content and Pleasure, even in those Things and Blessings which God sends as the greatest Comforts of Life. Our Estates honestly gotten; our Honours virtuously attained; our Wives discreetly kind and loving to us; our Children piously brought up and prospering; and even our Health maintained with Industry and Sobriety: We may give up so much of our Hearts to these great and singular Blessings, and take so much Pleasure in the enjoying them jointly or severally, that we may have less Consideration than we should have, of those greater and lasting Joys of the other World, at least that we may be less inclined to leave and part with this World; and then the immoderateness of the Joy we took in those excellent Instances of God's Favour and Kindness towards us, will be a Sin little inferior to the Satisfaction and Delight other Men have been transported with, in the most sensual Indulgence to their Passions and Appetites. In a time of publick Mourning and Humiliation, it would be very indecent to wear our Festival Habit and Ornament, lest we should not seem enough to be concerned, and of Kin to that Face of Mourning; though at other times those Dresses of Bravery may be Comely enough. In a time of solemn and devout Fasting, it will be an irreligious, as well as an uncomely Thing, to entertain our selves at liberal and full Tables, lest we appear not enough affected with the Piety of that Exercise, though at other times those Excesses may be good Ingredients to our Hospitality and Charity. So in a time of general Oppression, when all good Men are stripped of their Estates, banished, and the Privilege of their Honour wrested from them; when their Prince himself is made an Exile, and his Sovereign Power grasped into the Hands of bold and bloody Rebels; it may be a very unseasonable Gaudry to be possessed by an Artifice and Dexterity, of an Estate, lest it keep us from the just Horror of such an odious Rebellion, and disincline us to that Suffering which

which can be only supported with the Peace of a good Conscience; and then the first Thing we should desire to be rid of, is that Estate and Fortune that entangles us, and bewitches our Affections, and corrupts our Judgment. So in a Season of universal Sadness, when our Country is dismembred, and all noble and virtuous Families laid desolate; Fathers, and Sons, and Brothers, lopp'd off by a cruel Persecution, and Widows and Orphans exposed to the Misery of living: It may be a very great Excess to sit at full Tables, to have our Families entire about us, our Friends, and Wives, and Children about us, though in Want and Banishment; and those precious and lawful Comforts, under what Distresses soever enjoyed, may so engross us, that we may not be sensible enough of the publick Calamities; and think our selves still possessed of too much in this World to part willingly with, or to be contented to leave behind us, or to suffer to go before us: And then we should first be willing to be robbed of that we love with the most Passion; and if for Wife, or Child, or Friend, our Heart is the more set upon this World, it will be best that that Pleasure be taken from us; though from thence (if nothing else would produce it) our first Contempt of this, and Inclination to the better World, grew and proceeded. God cannot be so merciful to us, as speedily to snatch any Thing from us, which he discerns will incline us to an immoderate Liking of this World, or restrain us from an immoderate Love of God, and Contemplation upon the unspeakable Joys of the other.

We should obtain any Thing of God, and should ask nothing in vain of him, if he saw we desired one Thing of him with that Intentness and Fervour, and Vehemency as we ought; if he saw us affected to, and conversant with the Thoughts and Considerations of the Joys of Heaven; that though we were contented with, yet we undervalued the childish Pleasures which offer themselves to us in this World, in respect of those he reserves for us in the next; that we put a hearty Difference in our Estimation between those he permits us to take, and proffers us to taste here, and those other which we may, if we will, perpetually enjoy and feed on in his Presence, which alone is all imaginable Beauty to the Eye, and the most ravishing Musick to the Ear, and the most extended Pleasure to all the Senses: I say; if he saw our Hearts thus set towards him, we could not fail of any Thing our Hearts could desire of him. As he hath engaged us in a Journey, so he is very willing the Way should be as pleasant to us as the End; and if we sometimes meet with Hills, and Bogs, and Precipices in our Way, Distresses, and Imprisonments, and Scaffolds, to perplex and weary and destroy us, it is because he perceives we are too apt to mistake the Way for the End; the pleasing our selves, pampering our Lusts, and satisfying our Ambitions, for the serving of him; and the Courts of Princes, and accommodating our selves there, for the Court of Heaven, and sitting on his Right Hand; that we are so transported with the Glory of the Earth, that we think it greater than that which he hath adorned his own Palace with, at least, that we have no Mind to part with the one for the other; and therefore he sends Agues and Fevers into our Bodies, to shake and awaken us out of that Lethargy, and to burn away that Heat which enflames us; and Agues and Fevers into the State, to shake us out of our Estates and Offices, and waste us, by wounding and drawing our Blood from us: Whereas if we travelled steddily in this Journey, and disposed our Feet in the right way, submitted our inferior and

ministerial Parts, to the Drudgery and Exercise of what is necessary to our Passage through this World, but kept our Eyes and Heart, our noble and sovereign Faculties, upon the Beauty of Heaven, as the Place where God dwells, and where he is willing we should inhabit with him; we should find no Obstructions in our way, or such as would easily be expelled. If he permits sometimes a Cloud of Adversity and Melancholy to cover us, there will be some Beam of Confidence in him to break through that Cloud, that we shall not be in Darkness; if we be in Danger, we shall be without Fear, which is that which only gives an Edge to Danger to hurt us; and when our Enemies are even ready to lay hold on us, they shall be disappointed, and stumble even at their own Toils, and be entangled in their own Devices. If we compel him sometimes to withdraw himself, to withhold that Protection from us without which we cannot be safe, and to expose us to the Insolence of our Enemies, he is but withdrawn, he is within the Reach of our Voice, the Voice of our Prayer; and if our Neglect and Obstinacy hath driven him farther, that he hides himself, and though we feel him, call on him by a sudden and importunate Prayer, he hears us notwithstanding; yet he hath not forsaken us, or at least not in Anger; nor with a Resolution to look no more after us, or to deliver us up to the Will of our Oppressors; but only to shew us how miserable we are without him, and to teach us Patience to wait his Assistance, if it do not come at the Time we first stand in need of it: Let his Power be never so great, and his Presence never so near, it is not more our Duty to pray to him for Help, than it is to wait his Leisure till he vouchsafe to send it, and not to be faint, or murmur, how long soever he puts us to wait.

* *Wo unto you that have lost patience, and what will you do when the Lord shall visit you?* says the Son of Syrach. There is no Misery so strong and grievous, no Devotion so fervent and powerful, as can bring God to Article for the time of his Deliverance; if we will not wait, he will not come. It may be one of the greatest Ends for which the Affliction we labour under is applied to us, to reform and reduce, and root out the Passion and Impatience of our Nature; and God is too good a Physician to remove the Medicine, before it hath wrought its Effect, to put us out of his Hand before he hath cured us: Indeed he hath great Reason to teach us this Lesson thoroughly, since when he hath given us the Deliverance we pray for, all that we can desire in this Life, there is still somewhat more, and of more Value than that which he hath given us, which we must wait for: It is the Claim and Protestation which we must appear with at the Day of Judgment; † *Lo this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us.* If we have no Confidence in him, and of enjoying those Pleasures with him in which he himself takes Delight, we may be excused if we faint, and have not Courage enough to wait; but if we have that Cordial as to believe, that after all our Prostration here at his Feet, and after all our kneeling in vain to our Enemies, and being trampled on by them, we shall at last be so far lifted above them, as to sit by him in his heavenly Throne, the Task will not be greater than we can undergo, patiently to wait his Time for the Accomplishment of so transcendent an Honour and Favour to us.

Almighty

* Eccl. ii. 14.

† Isaiah xxv. 9.

Almighty God, thou art our sole Comfort and Confidence, which drivest away from us all Fear of our cruel, and powerful, and prevailing Enemies, and givest us Hope that all their wicked Imaginations and Devices against us shall come to Nought; dispose, we beseech thee, and restrain and fix our Thoughts and our Hearts in that manner on thee, that we may value nothing else but the beholding thy Face, and enjoying thy Presence in thy Kingdom of Heaven; at least that we may not so value any Thing else, as to make our selves unworthy of that beatifical Vision. O Lord, we are now forsaken by all Men, our Friends and our Kindred look not after us, take us up into the Arms of thy powerful Protection, and let not the Rage, and Fury, and Malice of our Enemies, utterly devour us. And if the Time of thy Deliverance which thou hast appointed for us be not yet come, give us thy Grace, that we may wait thy Leisure, and resign all our own Wills and Wishes to thy gracious Determination, and think That the only fit and seasonable Time and Manner which thou hast appointed for us. Amen.

P S A L M XXVIII.

WE have all Pride and Vanity enough to be very sensible, if they with whom we converse, or to whom we apply our selves, our Equals, or our Superiors, do not consider what we say to them; we are angry if our Equals answer not the Questions we ask of them, be they never so impertinent; and afflicted if our Superiors take no Notice of our Addresses, though oftentimes it would be more to our Advantage that they should be forgotten: But we have few of us that Piety and Devotion, as to be concerned if God hearkens not to what we say to him, gives us no Answer to what we ask of him: We have reduced the high and celestial Power of Prayer, to a Faculty and Artifice of the Lips; and when in our counterfeit Passion we have acted some of that Zeal with which the blessed Prophets, and other holy Men, upon extraordinary Occasions have been transported, and faucily used and profaned some of the Expressions which by the Dictate of God's own Spirit they have thought fit some times to make Use of; we strait think we have laid an Obligation upon God Almighty to be as propitious to us, as he was to those old Ministers of his: And which is worse than that Presumption, we believe that whatsoever succeeds according to our Fancy, or Appetite, or Humour, is the Effect of those Prayers; and that whatsoever God permits us to do, he is well contented we should do; at least we think, that by any perfunctory Exercise of Prayer we have done our Part; and that whether it be granted or not granted, the Office will be put to our Account, and God himself will answer for the Effects: Whereas the pious and godly Man is full of Agony in the pouring out his Prayers, till he finds how his Creator and Redeemer receives them; and because he knows that there are Prayers to which God is not only silent, gives no Answer to, but which he shuts out, never vouchsafes to hear, he is never so near dead, nor after he is dead, more in the Grave, than under the Apprehension that his Prayers are either not heard, or not thought worthy to be answered.

Indeed

Indeed this Agony and Sadness of Mind, this humble and devout Apprehension of God's Silence, is the only way to make him break it; he may be silent to the Voice of our Lips, he breaks that Silence upon the Voice of our Hearts, which being once fixed, he knows cannot be shaken; but as the Voice of the Heart is too fine and delicate to penetrate the Ear, so the Answer to that Voice may be so refined, so like Silence, that the natural Senses may not comprehend; and so we may apprehend a Silence where there is no Silence. In those Judgments which God will always undoubtedly some Time or other inflict upon those who have no due Regard of him, who with Dissimulation and Hypocrisy have enabled themselves to oppress innocent Men, we may find our selves sucked in and involved under the same Calamities which those ill Men undergo, and so think Providence deaf and silent to our Prayers; but in the patient bearing those Calamities, which is an Effect of our Supplications, and even an Answer from God to them, and in the Conclusion that attends those Calamities in this World, or the next we shall find that God was not always silent when we did not hear his Voice; and that though we seemed to be hurried the same way with them, our Fate is not the same, nor that our Journey does not end together.

Merciful Father, thou art our Strength, our Root, and our Shield; we depend on none but thee, and hope for Deliverance by no other Means than by thy immediate Power and Mercy; suffer us not to be made a Prey to those who manifest that they have no Regard of thee, by contemning all that thou hast commanded. Be a saving Strength to thy Anointed, and bless the People who shall faithfully serve him, out of the Conscience of their Duty to thee. Amen.

P S A L M XXIX.

IF Indevotion and Coldness in Religion, be a Crime in all Degrees of Christians, it is most odious and inexcusable in Kings and Princes; if it be uncomely and indecent in all others, it takes away all Lustre and Beauty in them. Besides the same joint Obligations with other Men, they have some peculiar Relations and Dependancies to and upon God Almighty; which as they infinitely increase their Obligations, so they are daily Remembrances, and put them in Mind how entirely and immediately their Power and Security consists in his Care, and watching over them: He hath communicated part of his own Title to them; nor are they so great and so safe in being Kings themselves, as in his being King for ever; and therefore they will be very unpardonable, if in the Glory that he hath given them, the Dominion over so many Subjects who enrich them with their Industry, and make them terrible with their Strength, they do not make full, and frequent, and humble Acknowledgment of his Glory and Strength, who hath alone given them theirs; and if they do not carefully provide for the Decency and Beauty of his House, and Supply of his Service, who hath given them Habitation in Courts and Palaces, different from other Men, upon no other Consideration, than that they are his Lieutenants and Vicegerents.

As the Greatness and Superiority of Princes are but as little small Rivulets flowing from the Fountain of his Power, and lost and extinguished presently again in the Sea of his unlimited Greatness, the Consideration of his Majesty; so every Exercise of their Royalty, every Act of their Jurisdiction, is of so inferior and subordinate an Allay, as cannot but put them in mind of that high and transcendent Influence that controuls all they do. They may value themselves upon their narrow Dominion over the Waters, those neighbouring Parts of the Seas which are nearest their Territories, and encompasses the Land they inhabit and govern; or upon their Empire over their Inland Waters, the Tears and the Sweat of their People; but then they cannot but remember, that if God's Voice were not obeyed upon those Waters, that part of the Sea over which they vainly imagine their Jurisdiction extends, would break in, and drown, and swallow their Land, their People, and themselves; and their Inland Waters too, which they believe are kept in and secured by such strong Banks, and Bounds, Laws, and Order and Method of Government, the People themselves, which makes a ** Voice like the Noise of the Seas, and Rushing like the Rushing of mighty Waters*, would oppress, and overwhelm, and destroy all their Titles, Pomp and Majesty: If God were not upon those Waters, the Supremacy of the other would be of very little Moment or Security. They may value themselves upon the high Place they hold above others, that they are as Cedars overlooking all the other Trees of the Forest, enjoy the Warmth of the Sun, and fear no Tempest of the Wind, receive the choice Fruit of the Earth into their own Treasury, and the Breath of their People dares not approach them, but in Supplications and Petitions; but they know then well enough too, that there is a Wind that can shake the Cedars; the least Displeasure of the Lord cannot only make those Cedars bow, and humble them to the same Height and Stature with the lowest and vilest Shrubs of the Forest, make them content to take Conditions from their Subjects, and share and divide their Authority with them; but break them down, and root them up, and with the least Breath of his Judgment, blow that lofty Cedar, like a straw, out of the Forest in which it grew, into another Soil; drive that overweening Prince out of his Dominions, to seek a Subsistence in a strange Land. Princes are therefore placed nearer God, and in that sublime Situation, that they may look more upon him than others do, have their Eyes more fixed towards him; and if they will chuse by the advantage of that Distance, rather to look down upon others, than look up to him, condemn and oppress those who are below them, instead of reverencing and glorifying him who is above them, and who only holds them up above other Men; he will open those Ears with his Thunder, which made themselves deaf to his Word; and dazzle and blast those Eyes with his Lightning, which took no Delight in beholding the Sunshine of his Favour towards them; he will quench those wholesome Flames of Zeal, Duty and Affection in the Hearts of their Subjects, which produced their Glory and Security, and instead thereof kindle raging Flames of Jealousy, Sedition and Rebellion, to burn their Palaces, and suppress their Power; he will shake those pleasant forests, and well-ordered Plantations, into a Wilderness, subject those glorious Monarchies to the Desolation and Confusion of popular Tumults and Insurrections; and it may be plant those Wildernesses with

some Shades, and cherish it with some Streams, reduce that Confusion into the Order of a Commonwealth, or some other Method of Government; and since Princes refused to be his Instruments, preserve his People by some other, though less happy Expedient.

Almighty God, infuse into the Minds and Hearts of all Kings and Princes, a true and entire Reverence towards thee, and an Acknowledgment that all their Glory and Strength is given to them by, and proceeds from thee, and that thou hast thereby obliged them to a more particular and peculiar Care of advancing thy Honour and Glory. Reconcile and unite the Affections of all their Subjects towards them, that they may pay them that Duty and Obedience which is just and due to them, and dispose and unite their Hearts to one another; that instead of endeavouring to alienate the Affections of each others Subjects from their natural Obedience to their lawful Sovereigns, they may look upon it as their Duty to thee, to suppress the Rebellions that break out in one anothers Dominions, and to support that Royalty which thou hast created for them. Have a particular Eye of Favour and Mercy upon thy Servant, our dear Sovereign; quench that horrid Fire of Rebellion, that hath almost burned up and destroyed his Dominions; and either cause his wicked Subjects to return to their true Allegiance towards him, by the Infusion of thy Grace into their Hearts; or infuse into the Hearts of all other Princes, a Resolution to assist him in such Manner, that that miserable People may be blessed under his pious and wise Government, to thy Glory. Amen.

P S A L M XXX.

IF our Charity were not contracted to the narrow Considerations of our selves, limited and bounded by a vulgar and ungenerous, as well as irreligious Love and Care of our own Interest; if we had a pious Sense of God's Favour to, and Blessing upon other Men, who have undergone the same or the like Miseries with us, and did think our selves concerned in that his Goodness towards them, and were ready to glorify him for it; we should not be so much inclined to suspect God's Mercy and Deliverance, because we lye longer under an Affliction than we are willing; and should apply real Comfort to our selves in any Distresses, from the Comfort we see him vouchsafe to administer to others, groaning under the like. When we see an innocent Man, as it were, snatched away by any extraordinary Deliverance from the Cruelty of powerful and successful Enemies, and so those Enemies disappointed of the Joy and Triumph they proposed to themselves in his Overthrow and Destruction: When we see a pious and devout Man, by the Interposition and Importunity of his Prayers and Devotion, either make himself superior to his Calamities, that the Sharpness and Agony of them is abated by his Patience, or absolutely freed and discharged from them by the powerful Hand of the Almighty, we should with the same Alacrity offer the Sacrifice of our Praises and Acknowledgment to God for that his Mercy, as if he had taken us out of the Dungeon; and thus laying up that Mercy in our Memory as done to us, (as in Truth it is)

will be a good Balsom to put into our own Wounds, and assuage any Impatience that might proceed from them. All good and true Christians are one Body, and when the least or the meanest Member of it feels any notable Ease, any Recovery from the Pain that possessed it, the whole Body must be refreshed; the Member that does not find that Refreshment, that is not delighted with any Blessing that befalls a Brother, is as Unnatural and as Foolish as the Hand that says unto the Foot, I have no Need of thee; the Body can never prosper without a Sympathy between all the Limbs.

Indeed this Concernment in one another, this mutual Joy and Sorrow for one another, is a necessary Duty to God Almighty, and makes him look upon and acknowledge us as Members of his, and of the same Body; and it is the greatest Assistance and Support to enable us to bear, and to carry us through any great Tribulation. We are all willing enough and desirous to have Sharers in any Affliction and Misery, and think our Sufferings somewhat the lighter, and the more supportable, if we have Companions, and those who lie under the same Burthen with us; but we love not to divide our Blessings and Deliverances, all those we would ingross to our selves; it is well if we can be content to see others made happy too, when we our selves have as much as we can desire; but to be willing to have a Deliverance divided amongst us, to give God Thanks for applying a Remedy to some part of our Sufferings, and for vouchsafing the same Proportion of his Favour at the same Time to a Fellow-sufferer, and so joining in an Acknowledgment for both, as if both were but one and the same Bounty; we are not grown up to that Christian Arithmetick, nor do think that a compleat Mercy to us, in which others are equal Gainers with us, and which leaves us under any Part of those Pressures from which we desire to be delivered: And therefore it is no wonder, if in this restrained and circumscribed Estimate of God's Mercies and his Judgments, when we aggravate our Sufferings, by what our King, and our Country, and our Friends, and other good Men suffer, as well as by what we undergo our selves; and this is an honest and pious Aggravation, and yet will not apply the Sense of any Favour or Mercy conferred upon our King, Country, or Friend, to our Ease and Comfort, if it do not reach to our own particular Redress and Deliverance; I say, it is no wonder if our Calamities make a deep Impression in us, and God's Protection and Favour towards us seems to be at a greater Distance from us, than in Truth it is.

This enlarged and extended Consideration of God's Love to us, by what he vouchsafes to others who are in the same Condition with us, would bring us to a more comfortable Prospect of God's Goodness; and we should believe every Blessing of his upon one of them, to be an Approach towards us, and an Evidence of his good Purpose seasonably to deliver us from any Thing that is grievous to, and not deserved by us; we should in this dispassioned Temper of Mind observe, and clearly discern the Difference of God's Nature, in his inflicting Punishments on us, and his conferring Favours on us; with what Reluctance he does the one, though our Sins importune, and even extort them from him, and with what Readiness and Bounty he throws down the other; and then how he restrains and limits his punishing Hand to a short Space of Time, but enlarges his Blessings and Rewards to Eternity. Our Night of Affliction and Calamity can last no longer than our Night of Sin and

Rebel-

Rebellion, the Time that we wrap up our selves in the thick Excesses of our Lusts and Appetites; that we hide our selves in the black Designs and Contrivances of our Malice and Revenge; that we lose our selves in the Mists and Machinations of our Pride and Ambition, and so by these Devices and Stratagems, shut out the least light Apparition of God's Grace from getting into us, and stop every Cranny through which we might look out towards him: But any glimmering of Repentance and godly Sorrow for what we have done, and of godly Purposes for the Time to come, shall no sooner appear, than that Night of Sin and Suffering will vanish away, and a glorious Morning, and Sunshine of Joy and Deliverance shall succeed; the Voice of our Lamentations shall be turned into Songs of Triumph, and all our Weeds of Mourning shall be torn off, and cut in Pieces, that they may never more be applied to us; and instead thereof, Robes of Joy and Pleasure shall be put on us; and we shall no sooner praise God for any one Blessing he hath vouchsafed to us, than a Succession of new shall attend us, for a perpetual Addition to the Argument of our Joy and Devotion.

*G*Racious Father, we magnify thy great and glorious Name for thy great Mercy to our Sovereign Lord the King, in the disposing the Hearts and Affections of one of his Kingdoms to return to their Allegiance and Obedience to him, and to be Instruments of reducing those who persist in their horrid Rebellion against him; confirm them in their good and dutiful Purposes, and let the Memory of what they have heretofore done amiss, work a true Repentance in them, and not an Obstinacy to proceed upon the same ill Grounds, and to press his Majesty to any Thing which in Conscience, Honour, or Justice he cannot consent to. Let this glimmering of thy Favour towards him, be a beginning of thy Favour to that whole miserable Nation of ours, and to every one of us, who at present are banished or otherwise oppressed by that usurped Power which now prevails in that Kingdom. Let the Miseries we have endured, satisfy thy Wrath for our former Sins, and work so far upon our Hearts and Affections for the future, that we may never think any Prosperity in this World constant, and to be depended on, otherwise than as it is supported by thy immediate Presence and Protection, and that thou no sooner turnest thy Face from us, than we are confounded. Amen.

P S A L M XXXI.

*T*HERE is a Shame that bringeth Sin, and there is a Shame which is Glory and Grace *, says the Son of Syrach. There is no greater Obstruction in the Pursuit of Virtue and Truth, than a Bashfulness to contradict this or that Man, a being ashamed or afraid, for there is a full Ingredient of Fear in all Shame, not to follow the Example of a great and powerful Person, though he does not follow the Track and Precepts of Truth; and to this supine Passion of the Mind, very many have owed their first Entrance into Ill and Vice; when contrary to their Judgments and Inclinations, they have contributed to

* Eccl. iv. 21.

an unlawful Act, or an unlawful Assertion, out of the Compliance with the Affections and Passions of another Man, from whom they had not the Confidence and Courage to differ; and then one Shame engendering another, (according to the natural Fruitfulness and Propagation of Sin) growing ashamed of their Shame, ashamed of the Ill they have done, and more ashamed to confess that they are so, have at last incorporated themselves into the same Fabrick of Wickedness of which they were ashamed, and so grow ashamed of nothing but of Repentance: and therefore it was very Sovereign Advice given by the same Counsellor, * *Let not the Reverence of any Man cause thee to fall.* He is in some degree of Security, who is above all other Temptations than of his own Weakness and natural Affections, (how imperfect or corrupt ever,) who is sure that the Importunity, and Interest, and Example of other Men, shall not have Power to transport him into Resolutions or Opinions not warranted by his own Reason and Conscience.

When the innocent and pious Man is in any great Adversity, plunged into any notable Distress and Affliction, a principal Part of his Devotion and Prayer is, that he may so entirely resign himself into the Hands and Good-will of God, against any Suggestions of meer human Policy and Self-Preservation, so absolutely trust in him, that he may not be ashamed of any Contempt or Sufferings which his Innocence may expose and subject him to: That he may have so perfect a Shame of all Sin, such a Horror and Detestation of Lying, Hypocrisy and Rebellion, that no Suggestions of Shame can creep into him, for any Reproach or Punishment he is to incur for opposing and abominating those pestilent Transgressions. From this godly and steady Application of himself to God, as a Rock that can neither be shaken or undermined, he contracts such a Courage, as makes him superior to all the Strength and Stratagems of his Enemies; and as if he were already all Soul, he scarce feels the Incumbrance of human Frailty, is not at all perplexed by its vain Insinuations and Temptations. If his Life be in Danger, and pursued by those who hate him because he hath declared his Hatred to the Wickedness which they commit, he deposits that Life with him who gave it; commits it to his Trust, and refers it wholly to him, whether he will give it him again by some signal Deliverance, or giving him an Opportunity to make an Escape from the present Malice of his Enemies; or whether he will make use of it in a Prison, or on a Scaffold, for the Improvement and Aggravation of the Guilt of his Adversaries, or for the Confirmation and Example of others, not to be frightened from their Duty for love of their Life, or fear of Death: And in that Case, let his Death be accompanied with all the Degrees and Circumstances of Reproach and Ignominy, which the Pride and Power of his Enemies can administer, he meets it with the Joy and Glory of a Bridegroom, and bequeaths the Shame as a Legacy to those who contrive, and are delighted with that Barbarity; Shame being only their Portion, who do that which they ought to suffer for, not theirs who suffer for that which others have done. When he is broken with the long Weight of Oppression, and the very Health of his Body impaired with the Grief of his Mind, his Spirits spent in Suffering, and his Strength worn away by Sickness and Diseases contracted in and by those Sufferings, he puts God in Mind of some former Mercy to him, and conjures him by that to take Compassion upon his present Misery,

5 Y

and

* Verse 22.

and acquiesces under that Conjurat[i]on and Hope. If he finds the Unkindness and Negligence of his Friends added to the Pride and Insolence of his Enemies; or that the Success and Cruelty of his Adversaries have rendered them so terrible, that his Friends are afraid to owe him, or keep Correspondence with him; that his Condition is thought so desperate, that his Dependants, they who have grown up under him and been nourished by him, believe him never capable of being of farther Use to them; and from thence first quietly hearken to the Slander and Defamations which are raised to take away his Reputation and Credit, and then contribute themselves to those Calumnies, and to make themselves gracious to his Oppressors, concur in any Project or Design against him; he anchors himself still in that fast Hold, that the Season of his Prosperity and Adversity, the Time of his Life and his Death, and the Pomp and Circumstances of either, is in his Power and Disposal who takes Care of his Protection, and not in theirs who desire his Destruction; and therefore he is no farther moved with those melancholic Ingredients into his Affliction, the Infidelity of Friends, and Ingratitude of Servants, than to conclude how vain any other Confidence is than in him alone, who is all Mercy, and Goodness, and Constancy. And though he may on a sudden be transported upon the Agony and Sharpness of such a transcendent Calamity, as seems to sweep away with it all Hope of future Happiness; as upon the Murder of a pious Prince, for whose Sake, and by whose Conduct and Virtue he hopes for Deliverance; and the Guilt of whose Blood will probably harden the Hearts of all Offenders against any Thought of Repentance, and so make them pursue all the desperate ways of Destruction, as their only Refuge and Security: I say, if upon so dismal a piece of Wickedness, the innocent Man be suddenly transported by his Extasy and Amazement, to believe that God hath given over all Care of him, and of the innocent Part of that Nation, and given them up to be destroyed; God will not take Advantage of that Jealousy and Suspicion of him; but notwithstanding that Passion, will at such a Time as shall best manifest his Kindness, preserve and deliver his Life, his Fortune, and his Fame, from all the Assaults of Violence or Detraction.

Merciful God, all our Trust and Confidence is in thee, and into thy gracious Disposal we commit all that we are, and all that we have: Thou seest the Stratagems that are used, and the Nets which are laid to entrap and destroy us; thou knowest the Misery we have endured in Banishment from our Country and our Fortunes, the Weakness we are reduced to, the Contempt our Enemies have of us, and the Fear our Friends are possessed with, for being thought to wish us well; thou hast yet set our Feet at Liberty, that we have escaped a great Part of their Malice: Take us, good Father, into thy more immediate Protection, and let us not be made a Shame and a Scoff to those who oppress us for performing our Duty to thee, root out their Pride, Fury and Rebellion, and restore the King, and they who faithfully serve thee and him, to their Country again. Amen.

P S A L M XXXII.

WE ordinarily say, that no Man is so good a Judge of the Benefit and Happiness of Health, as he that is without it, that labours under some painful and consuming Sickness or Disease: Certainly no Man can declare the Value of Health with that Authority, can give so sensible Evidence of the Difference, as he who is recovered from the Gates of Death, from the Violence of a Fever, or the languishing of a Consumption, to a firm and composed Vigor and Constitution of Body. It may be there is no body better apprehends the immense Joy and Pleasure that always attends upon Innocence and Grace, than they who live and triumph in notorious License and Wickedness; for let their Pride and Pomp be what it will, and their outward Appearance seem so full of Tranquility, as if they enjoyed all that Pleasure and Happiness which their Oppression and Tyranny have robbed others of, they have still such Pangs and Throws upon them, such Nights of Melancholy succeeding their Days Glory, such dismal Thoughts and Apprehensions in their Retiredness and Loneliness, after their Mirth and Jollity before Company, such Remorse for the Sins they act, (it may be in the very Time of their acting) that they clearly discern that the Innocence they are without, is perplexed with none of those Trances; and that there is a Joy of Heart, which all their Powers and Stratagems cannot compass, and make them Masters of. Without doubt that Man to whom God hath vouchsafed the Grace of true and lively Repentance for the Sins he hath committed, and thereby as clear and lively an Evidence that they are forgiven, forgotten, and razed out, all the Marks and Stains of them so outgrown, that God himself cannot discern what, or where they were; who finds himself at the same time recovered from his Pestilential Fever, and from the Weakness, and Paleness, and Ghastliness that it had produced, and restored to his full Strength and Vigor, and Vivacity, and out of those another kind of Beauty overshadowing him, than it may be he was ever before adorned with: I say, that Man is possessed of the most transcendent inward Joy and Delight, that the Mind of Man can comprehend; and it is possible, in the Extent of it, greater than a Soul of a more primitive Severity and Integrity can it self feel: As there is little Doubt, he who hath always enjoyed a full Plenty, without any Interruption by Distresses, hath at no Time felt a ravishing and transporting Joy like his, who when he is hurrying to a dark and loathsome Prison by an angry Creditor, finds his great Debt suddenly discharged by the Compassion of a Friend or Stranger, and himself in full Liberty and Security.

There needs little to be said to endear this Mercy to us; we are all very willing to be pardoned and forgiven, to have the Ill we have done forgotten, and our Sins not laid to our Charge: Nay, it may be we are willing to renounce those Sins we have most delighted in, and really to depart from the Practice of them, and abhor all those who continue in the same; and yet we may be very far from obtaining that Mercy and Forgiveness, from whence that Happiness and Joy of Heart we speak of doth result: We may be too weak to continue in the Sins we love, or too unprosperous in them; or others may thrive so much bet-

ter in them than we, that the Envy of their Prosperity, and the Malice against their Persons, may make us decline that Sin, wherein they have got so much the better of us. We may be weary of Rebellion, because other Men have out-rebelled us, and gotten that Superiority and Power which we meant to enjoy our selves; and so our Return to our Allegiance may be an Effect of our Passion, not of our Conscience; of our Hatred against those who prevail, not our Love to God, or our King; and all this without any Acknowledgment of the Ill we have done, only inveighing against those who are worse than we say we intended to be, though their Conclusions flow very naturally from our Premises. But God will cover none of those Sins we are so solicitous our selves to cover, nor forgive that which we seem to think needs no Forgiveness: It must be our exposing them to the View of the World, in a hearty Acknowledgment and Detestation of them, and a devout abhorring our selves for committing them, that must prevail with the Almighty to cover them; and our own severe charging our selves with the Guilt of them, and with the Guilt of others who have followed our Example, which must move him no longer to impute them to us, and to wipe off those Tears they have produced.

It is a strange Thing to consider how rigid, and punctual, and formal we our selves are, in the remitting any Injuries done to us; what Submission we expect for every Reproach or Calumny; what Satisfaction we insist on, if we have sustained any Damage or Loss; at least, what Confession and Acknowledgment we require, that we have been wronged, and that the Party hath proceeded unjustly or unwarrantably with or against us; and without this, we say we can have no Security or Assurance that he will not do the same again, nor will other Men understand that we have been ill used: And yet we think, or seem to think, that God requires or expects none of this; and as if the Act of Oblivion were to pass only on our Parts, and by us, we reckon it enough if we refrain from any notorious Sin we have been formerly indulgent to, and leave to affront God this Year with that Sin which we offended him most with the last: Whereas God is not satisfied in any Degree, nor the pious Man himself is not satisfied, till he hath published to the World, the Sense he hath himself of his Error, and the Detestation he conceives against it. *David* found no Ease or Peace within himself after his Sin of Adultery, (which is the most secret Sin we can commit, and the most easy to be concealed) though he had given it over, and made the best outward Recompence for it, that Transgression is humanly capable of; till he had bewailed publicly, and recanted the Ill he had done, and left a Record of his Transgression and Penitence together. And if we have been guilty of the Sin of Rebellion, we must observe the same Method too, before we can reasonably believe the Guilt of it is rooted out; acknowledge and detest it before Men, and by such Reproaches of it, and of our selves for it, give God and the World a kind of Security that we shall not again fall into it. Indeed the fiery Nature of such raging Sins, is too hot to be contained in any pious Breasts; and if it find not other Vent, will burn its way out by its own Anguish; and it is to be feared, that he who conceals it in his own Bosom, intends to keep some Root of it warm and hot enough to sprout out again upon another Opportunity; at least, he cannot give himself Assurance it shall not, till he hath irreconciled himself to it by an avowed Confession, which discredits that Sin, and gives Ease

to the Sinner, and is the only way to reverse (as much as in us lies) the Mischief that our Example hath wrought in other Men; at least, to inhibit other Men from following our Examples: For how shall those who have been seduced by the Principles my Logick or my Rhetorick hath infused into them, or perverted by the Reverence they paid to my Example, or corrupted by their Dependence or Relation to my Person, know that they do not well, or that which I would not have them do, if I do not take as much Pains to undeceive, as I did to deceive them; and confess that I ought not to have done what I did, and persuade them to give it over, and repent as I have done? Since a bare refraining from it, may proceed from some Conveniency, which may not be correspondent with that of other Mens; besides that many are well content and pleased that other Men do that which they themselves, for many Reasons, think not fit at that Time to do.

Certainly this Ingenuity, and frank Declaration of what we have done amiss, and our hearty Sorrow for it, over and above that it is a Part of that full Repentance which can only give us Assurance of the Joys of the next World, brings a greater present Content and Pleasure to the Mind (whatever for want of Experience we think to the contrary) than that Sullenness and Pride of concealing it (for that Reservation proceeds only from Pride) can do. For as the resisting, and opposing, and mastering any notorious Sin, to which our natural Affections or Passions does incline and invite us, is a greater present Content to us, and the Pleasure we feel in the Act of that Resistance greater than we could have in the Act of the Sin we are inclined to; (as there is little Doubt, there is no Comparison between the Joy of Heart which the revengeful Man tastes in the Murther of his Enemy, and that present Serenity of Mind, and inward Delight, which results to the charitable Man, from his Conquest of those Temptations;) so the confessing and clear acknowledging of the Sins we have committed, (which is a kind of unfinning them) and communicating the several Species of the Poison which wrought upon us, and which we administered to other Men, gives us such present inward Ease, and is such a disburthening of that weak Part, which is not made to bear such destroying Weight, that the taking off our Irons and Chains in Prison, nay, the freeing us at once from that Affliction which lies the heaviest on us, does not give us half so sensible a Refreshment. This draws God's Favour to us, and keeps his Eye upon us, that it is no more in our Power to go out of the Way he hath prescribed; and therefore if we neglect it, we are more like Beasts, who cannot revolve what they did Yesterday, nor foresee what they are to do to Morrow, than like Christians, or Men of sober Understanding.

They who defer the complying with this excellent Duty, and put it off till they believe themselves nearer parting with this World, (for there are very few who do not believe it fit and necessary to be done at some Time, and in some Manner) have not Reason to be confident that they shall pray to God in a Time when he will be found; they are not sure that the Waters will be navigable; that their Tears will be strong enough and deep enough, to carry their Repentance and Confession to him; that the Floods may not be so strong, that they cannot approach him; his Anger so great for deferring it, that he may not then give them Grace and Inclination to perform it; and that they may not believe, that what hath brought them no sensible Inconvenience

hitherto, will bring no Mischief upon them for the Time to come. The Danger is evident enough from the Delay, and the unspeakable Benefit as apparent, from a just, and devout, and early Accomplishment, and therefore there ought to be little Scruple in the Election.

*M*erciful and gracious Father, since thou hast given us Ability to comprehend the infinite Joy and Blessedness we may possess in thy Mercy, and thy Forgiveness of our greatest and most crying Sins, and to understand by what Way and Means we are to attain the heavenly Favour, vouchsafe we beseech thee to infuse that Grace into our Hearts, that we may pursue that Course thou hast prescribed. Let us feel that Heat and Horror in our Breasts from the concealing any of our Sins, that may force us to an humble Confession of them to thee with true Penitence, and to a Manifestation of our abominating of them to the World. Let us not defer this necessary Sacrifice for a Time to come, but discharge this Debt whilst we are able, and whilst it may do good upon others, as well as upon ourselves, that we may all of us so join in a hearty Sorrow for our Sins, and in as hearty a Purpose of our Amendment, that thou may'st not impute any of them to us, but so take us into thy Protection, and compass us about with thy Mercy, that we may henceforth be glad and rejoice in thee to our Lives End. Amen.

P S A L M XXXIII.

*P*raise is not seemly in the Mouth of a Sinner, for it was not sent him of the Lord, says the Son of Syrach*; that is, he was not sent of the Lord to praise him, he expects it not at his Hands, he would not have him do it. We our selves do not desire to be praised by ill and wicked Men, nor do we think the better of our selves for their Commendations, but rather doubt that our Fame may be impaired with good Men by such Testimony: God himself is somewhat of that Mind, and believes his Service profaned, when such Men bear a Part in it; he knows all their Prayers are Hypocrisy, and their Praises Stratagems; that their Psalms are their usual Preface to Rebellion, or some other transcendent Wickedness; that they sing loudest when they most successfully oppress the Widows, and deceive the Fatherless; as if their singing were only like the Noise of Drums and Trumpets in the Battell, to drown the Cries and Groans of those whom they devour: All their Musick is of the Tongue and Voice, magnifying themselves loudly, and pretending to be the Saints of the Earth; but they have no Instruments of Ten Strings, which may keep their Hands doing too; no Actions of Justice or Charity in their Musick, their Psalms will not admit that Variety, and therefore it is no wonder if God does not desire their Company in his Choir. † *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be abomination, says Solomon; and as his prayer, so shall his praises be.* He who will not hearken to what God directs, not do what he enjoins, hath no Reason to ask any Thing of him, in truth were better not to pretend to think of him at all; he had much rather we should not use his Name at all, than only mention him

† Eccl. xv. 9;

† Prov. xxviii. 9;

in our Oaths and Blasphemies; and that we should never magnify his Power, his Providence, or his Mercy, rather than make use of those Discourses to seditious and sacrilegious Purposes. If we live like Heathens or Infidels, our Christian Prayers do but affront his Majesty, and our Praises depress his Glory.

But, *Rectos decet collaudatio*, praising him very well becomes those who faithfully desire to serve him; he vouchsafes to be exalted with those Praises, and takes a Delight to see us rejoice in that pious Musick. The pious Man sings always with an Instrument, is doing as well as speaking well; his Words and Actions keeping one Tune, make excellent Melody: And therefore the mystical Sense of that Instrument of Ten Strings, is understood by some learned Men, that we should praise God by a perfect Observation of the Duties enjoined in the Decalogue, observe his Ten Commandments; and then the profane and uncharitable Persons will never have their Instruments well or fully strung. We ought to receive no new Favour or Blessing from the Almighty, without preparing and returning a new, and a new kind of Acknowledgment; every Accumulation of Bounty from him, should raise our Musick a Note higher; if he relieves us in any signal Distress, delivers us from the Power and Cruelty of a merciless Enemy, we ought carefully to reform, and root out that Sin which brought us into that Distress, or which overtook us in it, or grew out of the Pain and Agony of it, our Pride and Incircumspection, our Vanity and Negligence, our Murmuring and Impatience; we ought faithfully and religiously to improve that Piety and Devotion which we have learned and been inclined to in our Distress and Affliction, and carefully perform all those Obligations, which in our pious and private Purposes we have then promised. This is to sing unto him a new Song, such a one as he most desires to hear, to correct and repair that Discord which our Extravagancies and Transgressions had produced, and to reduce and conform our Wills and Affections to the same Harmony in which he created us. When he pleases to give us such Parts of Nature, or Art, as gives us some Advantage in the Business of the World, above other Men; that we are really better qualified, wiser and more dexterous than others, or that the Affections of others are so disposed as to think us so, and thereupon to prefer us before others, whereby we find less Opposition in obtaining the Things we most desire; we ought so eminently to declare our Gratitude to God Almighty, that all Men may discern that we do really impute the Good that is in us, and what other Men do for us, to the single and extraordinary Assistance and Goodness of him, without the least Vanity of imagining that of our selves, or by our selves, we could have excelled or over-reached the poorest Idiot. If we do this, we play musically and skilfully to him with a loud Voice: Whereas if we endeavour to conceal those Blessings, by reserving and applying them to our own private Benefit and Advantage, without advancing the Publick by them; or if we magnify God for them in such a Manner, as if we were joint Purchasers with him, had provided him such Materials as he could not but work with; brought him such a Nature, and such Art, such a Wit, and such Learning, as he could not but prosper, at least, that needed less of his Care, were easier made successful than other Men; we quite spoil the Musick which he likes, and at best, like over-skilful Musicians, who by an over-warbling desire to make the Voice
not

not intelligible, are without that Vociferation which he expects, and is only delighted in.

The Reason that God is pleased with their Musick, and is willing only to be praised by honest and just Men, is because they always speak as they think, their Words are all from their Hearts; whereas the Wicked only use the Words of their Lips, Words of their own making, and made with special Care, that their Thoughts may not be known by them. Indeed there is no Reason to expect the Company of ill Men, in this Consort of Joy and Praises and Thanksgiving to God; since the one cannot take Delight in and praise him for that which the others do, and have all the Reason to do. That which is the greatest Pleasure and Comfort to the one, is the greatest Dread and Terror to the other: The one finds all the Satisfaction and Content imaginable, that he upon whom we all depend for Happiness in this World, or that which is to come, is entire Truth, Justice and Mercy; that he will faithfully perform what he hath promised, carefully protect those who are in the Right, and graciously supply with his Mercy what we cannot claim from his Justice; in truth, that we have so good a Title to his Mercy, that we may boldly appeal from his Justice, and call in the Aid of the Son against the Severity of the Father. There cannot be that Argument of Confusion and Distraction to the other, as to think of God's Truth; it were much better for him that all he hath said were false, and that he would perform nothing that he had promised; he finds so sad a Legacy bequeathed to him, that he may well wish the Testament cancelled or revoked: Nor can he take more Pleasure that he is Merciful, than a Prisoner who is ready to die with Famine can, by beholding through his Grate, a liberal Alms distributed to those who are as hungry as himself, which makes his own Emptiness the more sharp and importunate. He knows well enough, that his Mercy is shut up from all those, who have neither believed his Truth, nor feared his Justice, and that he can now no more recal his Sins, than the Time in which they were committed. The just and innocent Man is comforted and exalted with the Contemplation of God's infinite Power, that he made Heaven and Earth in a Moment, with the speaking a Word; that he distributed them into that Order and Method of Government, as might best manifest his Glory, and restrain those unruly Elements, which might be most like to invade his Creation and break his Order, within such Bounds as they cannot transgress; and therefore they hope and believe, that he will always protect and defend the Work of his own Hands, maintain those Forms, and that Order of Government and Justice, which most conduce to his Honour and the publick Peace, against all factious and seditious Insurrections; and that though Princes may for a Time be disquieted, and even oppressed by Rebellion and Treason, as the Sun or Moon may be eclipsed, or as the Sea may break in and overwhelm some Habitations; yet that he will no more suffer them to be destroyed and rooted out, (if they apply themselves heartily to his Service) than he will permit those Two glorious Lights of the World to be removed from their Orbs, or the Sea to break loose from those Store-Houses he hath shut it up in. The wicked and rebellious Person takes no Delight in this Contemplation, and wishes rather, and endeavours to believe, that all this Fabrick was made by Chance, and so that God takes no Care what is done in it: He would have the Store-houses broken open, that the Sea might overwhelm all; all Forms of Order and Govern-

Government overthrown, and popular License (as wild and destroying as the Sea) prevail over the World; he is troubled at these Restraints of Discipline and Sovereignty. The Refreshment is unspeakable that the poor Man, over-reached by the Counsels, or over-born by the Contrivance of the crafty and devouring Oppressor, finds, by revolving that he whom he serves is wise enough to elude all those Stratagems, disappoint those Counsels, and bring all those Imaginations and Devices to Nought; that he looks upon his Enemies whilst they are doing, and upon him whilst he is suffering, and will suffer the one to inflict no more than it is fit that the other should bear. Alas! What Joy can the ill Man have in this, to know that that Project which he thought to weave with that Subtilty and Pride of his Brain, that it would destroy Kingdoms, or reduce those Kingdoms to his Devotion, is discerned by one who can unweave all that Web, and make it too weak to molest a poor Cottager? To find that the Mine he hath digged with such Secresy and Industry to blow up a City, is discovered by the Governor of it, who can, when he will, let in a River to drown it, and all who are in it? What Comfort can it be to him, that God's Eye is always upon him, sees all that he does, when he could never see him do that which he ought, but always upon some dark and enormous Counsel or Action, at which he should tremble to be seen? What Consternation must it bring to him, to know that an Army with which he hath been able to oppress his Country, drive out his Prince, and make other Princes stand in Awe of him, and upon the only Strength of which his Life and his Fortune depends, can be no Security to him, but that it will revolt or disband upon the least Nod or Sign of him whom he hath most offended? Whereas the upright Person, when the Pride of his Enemies is most insolent, and most threatening, and urging his Destruction, remains still with Courage and Confidence, because he knows that Army will be as weak as it is rebellious, when he vouchsafes to speak the Word who hath hitherto kept him alive in Famine, and promised to preserve him from Destruction.

Almighty and merciful Father, we magnify thy great Name from the bottom of our Hearts, with all the Joy we can express, for thy great Mercy towards us; we acknowledge thy Truth, and thy Goodness, thy Justice and thy Mercy, thy Wisdom and thy Power, and in all those thy great Attributes, place all our Hope and Security: Thou beholdest what we suffer, and what other Men have done to us, and the desperate Counsels they still hold to do more Mischief to thy Church, to their own lawful King, and to us. Disappoint those Counsels, and destroy those proud Armies upon which they have placed their Confidence, without regarding what thou hast commanded: Let them see how vain all other Hope of Safety but in thee is, and take us into thy immediate Care, and speedy Deliverance, because we have trusted in thee; and for that Trust's Sake, suffer us not to perish or faint under this unjust and terrible Persecution, for thy Son's Sake, who is our Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

P S A L M XXXIV.

MEN under any great Distress of Fortune, or any sharp Pain of Sickness, need not much Importunity nor many Arguments to persuade them to Devotion; we are all ready enough to go to God, when we have no whither else to go; to pray to him, when we know not what else to do; and cry God help us, when we have tried all other ways, and can no longer help our selves: And that kind of Devotion, those Addresses prosper accordingly: We go to do that which we know not how to do, and therefore it is no wonder that we lose our Labour; that having never prayed before, we do it not then in such a Manner, as God can hear and understand us; who does not usually serve those who have not first served him: Not that he is not well pleased we should apply our selves to him in our Necessities, and with most Importunity in our most pressing and most importunate Necessities, but he is angry that we call not to him till then; that we think we have no need of him till we find our Condition even desperate; in truth, that we are so foolish, as not to discern our own Necessities, to know that we had in that Article of Time most need of him, when we thought our selves most secure in our Undertakings, and least capable of being disappointed in whatsoever we had set our Hearts upon. If we did really believe our selves to be in as much Danger, and as much need of his immediate Care and Protection in our full Health and Vigor of Body, in our high and uninterrupted Prosperity and Success of Fortune, as in our lowest Adversity, and most weakening Sickness, our whole Life would be one continued Scene of Innocence and Devotion, and all our Triumphs seasoned with the same Ejaculations which we foolishly reserved for our Death-bed: And it is a wonderful strange Incogitancy, or rather a proud undervaluing and contempt of Providence, to think we have less Need of him, or to think less upon him in those easy and happy Seasons; when if any Moment of our Life might be excused from Devotion, and Resort to God Almighty for his Help and Assistance, it would be the Time of our Adversity and Sickness, when we are not in so much Danger (at least) of offending him by so many Offences. In our Health we affront him with our Lusts, Surfeits and Excesses; and in our Plenty, with our Pride, Insolence and Oppression; all which are pleasant and pregnant Sins, and produce a Thousand others; whereas Impatience in our Adversity, and Despair in our Sickness, are our usual Faults, which are of so uneasy a Nature, that they torment our selves as well as trouble him, and so become a part of our Punishment, as of our Transgression. They who are least corrupted with those Affections and Passions, it may be have more Need of his Support than other Men; they who have the best Consciences of doing their Duty, that they may not be transported with Pride and Uncharitableness even from their Innocence; and they who are most frequently at their Prayers, with Vanity and Presumption from their Devotion. We can neither refrain from doing ill, nor persevere in well-doing, without the immediate Support and Influence of his good Spirit; and therefore there must be no Moment of our Life pass, without a serious Contemplation of his Mercy, and imploring his Assistance,

As we should in this acquired Habit of Religion, continually magnify God's general Providence towards us, and his Accumulation of so many Blessings upon us, so when we find a more particular and remarkable Effect of his Goodness, in an extraordinary Deliverance from Danger that was ready to devour us, we ought to celebrate this Deliverance in some extraordinary Method and Solemnity; keep a Record in our Hearts of every Circumstance of the Peril we were in, and by what Degrees we got out of it. We should imitate the learned Physicians, who make a kind of History upon the Sickness of every Patient, begin not their Observations from his first visible Declension of Strength, but from his first Indisposition; and being less well, or less cheerful than he was before, how his Disease stole upon him, and robbed him of his natural Vivacity; when it brought him to his Bed, and what Progress it made after; observe the Effect and Operation of every Medicine and Prescription, what Part Nature bears, and how much it contributes to every Application; where the Sleeps grow less disquieted, and by what Degrees the Pulse returns to its primitive Motion and Temper. We should use the same Order in the Observation of our spiritual Weakness; our giving our selves up to any Sins, and the Sicknesses and Diseases, the outward Affliction and Distresses which naturally attends such Prostitution, and the Deliverance God vouchsafes out of those Perplexities: We should revolve seriously the Growth and Progress, and Maturity of the Sin, the Punishment and the Pardon; how our first Guilt stole into us, through our Love, or our Fear, our Desire to please this Man, and our want of Courage to offend that, and so that we had lost our Innocence, before we found that we had an Inclination to Vice; by what Degrees our Adversity was brought upon us, by what Oversight of our own, and by what Cunning, Malice, and Power of our Enemies; what kind of Devotion brought us most Ease and Comfort; what Effect this Prayer had, and that Humiliation; how God freed us from our Sufferings; first in composing our Minds to Patience and entire Submission to and Dependence upon him, which took off the Smart and Anguish of them; and then entirely by converting some, and destroying others of our Enemies, and so restoring us to our former Condition, and sometimes improving it. And if God hath so blessed our Wit, or our Courage, or any of our Faculties, that by any Stratagems of our own, we have contributed to our Deliverance, eluded our Enemy by Dexterity, or broke from him by Force: We may take Pleasure in, and with Delight publish that Skill and Dexterity of ours, if we acknowledge and impute it to him from whom we received it. It is not Modesty but Stupidity to conceal, or not to acknowledge, and with some Joy to magnify any Invention of our own, by which our selves, or the Publick, have received any notable Advantage, provided we confess the true Author of it. That General who surprizes his Enemy by an Ambush, or defeats them by a Battel, or avoids them by a well-ordered Retreat, if he puts no Value upon his own Conduct, and hath not some Confidence in it, cannot enough thank God for having taught his Hands to War, and his Fingers to Fight. If we put no Price upon our selves for what by God's Goodness we excel others in, we cannot be so grateful to him as we ought to be for those Advantages, nor be so sensible of the Obligation we have to excel others in Piety and Obedience towards him. *David* himself made a holy Boast of having deluded the King of the *Philistines*, by

coun-

counterfeiting himself Mad; and by the History of having saved his Life by that Way, celebrated the peculiar Mercy of God towards him, and inflamed the Hearts of others the more to admire his Goodness, to increase their Trust in him, and their Fear of him, and entirely to depend on his Protection in whatsoever can befall them.

He who is perfectly recovered of a languishing and desperate Disease will easily find Credit to advance the Glory and Skill of his Physician, every Man being glad to hear that the Sickness he labours in can be cured, and ready to resort to him that can do it. Men who are in Distress, are very willing to be informed of the Escape of any who were in the same Condition, and well content to take Advice from them, what Remedies to apply, and what Course to take. So that the short History of one Man's Deliverance hath always more Reputation, than the most exact Prescription of general Rules and Directions for our Comportment: But the Mischief is, we neglect all Rules and Prescriptions, if they are not supported with new and frequent Histories; what God hath heretofore done for good Men who have put their Trust in him, does not work upon us, except he confirms us by the like Examples, when we have suffered as much as we are willing to bear: How he hath defended and delivered them who have truly and religiously served him, makes little Impression in us, if we in the mean Time, instead of being delivered from, are delivered into the Hands of our Enemies, if he heard them, and let us cry in vain to him. If it were otherwise, we should make another Use of what God hath always done on their Behalf, who have suffered innocently; and apply Examples enough to our own Comfort, to keep up our Confidence in him, and our Patience, till he thinks fit to relieve us; we should find that we are so far from being disappointed of those Blessings he hath formerly bestowed on those who fear and trust in him, that all our Want, and all our Anguish, proceeds from the real want of that Fear and Confidence. It is not want of Experience or Observation, but of Consideration and Ingenuity, if we do not confess that God hath so immediate a Care of all those who faithfully serve him, that he hears them whenever they ask of him; or if through Inadvertency and Unskilfulness they know not how to ask, if Dangers come upon them before they are aware, he watches for them, and prevents the Mischief: Whereas his Eyes are on the Wicked only to confound and destroy, and root them out: That the Rich, covetous and ambitious Persons, those Lions and Beasts of Prey, are always in Want; either by some sudden Judgment they lose what they have, or their Appetite is increased by having, and so they feel more want of what they covet and have not, than Plenty and Benefit in what they possess; whilst the innocent Men, how poor and oppressed, and despised soever, enjoy what they have, and are not without any Thing which is necessary or good for them; they may sometimes ask that which is not granted to them, or not granted at that Time when they ask, but it is because it is not then good for them to have it. If we would entitle our selves to this bountiful Care of his, we must manifest such a Fear and Love towards him, as may make us worthy of it; we must not set such a Value upon this Life, as to be disordered, or discomposed in making our Provisions for the next: Indeed we must not look upon this Life as consisting in Length of Days, but Integrity of Actions; not in living long, but living well; we must refrain from evil Words, and evil Thoughts, do no body any Wrong, and do all the Of-

fices of Charity that we are able, desire to have Peace with all the World, and if we cannot obtain it, yet shew that there is no Fault in our Endeavour. Let us perform these Duties, or do the best we can to perform them, and we may be sure that Providence will be always so near us, that we shall outlive all our Miseries and Persecutions; and though we may be exercised with Afflictions, we shall infallibly escape Desolation.

O Lord God, we do bless and praise thy great and glorious Name, for all those Mercies and Deliverances which from Time to Time thou hast vouchsafed to them who put their Trust in thee: We beseech thee infuse into our Hearts the same Love and Fear of thee, the same Trust and Confidence in thee, by which they purchased their Deliverance; and then (gracious Father) make us likewise Examples of the same thy Mercy; and let us not feel the Wants and Distresses which the Pride and Cruelty of our Enemies think to reduce us to. Accept our Repentance for our Sins, and the Sufferings which we have already undergone for them: Rescue us by thy Power from the Oppression that is too strong for us, and at last deliver us out of their Hands, who have thus long dealt unmercifully with us. Put a Period to their destroying Malice, and let them discern that there is a Difference between thy Countenance towards them, and towards us; that thou lookest at them only to observe their Wickedness, and to behold their Distraction; but on us to watch and preserve, and protect us from their Oppression and Tyranny, at least from that Desolation which they would bring upon us. Amen.

P S A L M XXXV.

TO use others as we are willing and desire to be used our selves, is a good Rule, and will keep us just and charitable to all Men; since it cannot be believed that we are willing to find others unjust and uncharitable to us. To use others as we are used our selves, nay, as they themselves use us, is no good Rule, either in Religion, or moral Justice. I may not, when it is in my Power, oppress him, and take away his Estate from him, who when he had Power oppressed me, and violently took my Estate from me; no more than I may defame and traduce him, who hath suborned Witnesses, and used all other indirect ways to take away my good Name. Natural Reason and moral Justice being strong enough to evince, that what was simply unlawful for any other to practise towards me, cannot be lawful for me to practise towards him; such Retaliation needs no Argument from Divinity to discountenance or controul it. Natural Reason, and the Law of Nature it self, makes it so irrational and odious, that we need resort only to the Precepts and the Practice of Philosophers, who considered only the Justice and the Decency which was necessary to be observed in all their Actions, in order to their living well in this World, to confirm us in this Resolution. But Religion carries us much further, and would keep our Thoughts and Affections as entire as the other would our Actions; and restrains us not only from doing Wrong to those who have been unjust

just to us, but from being glad when they are oppressed by other Men; nay, obliges us to be sorry when any Ill befalls them, and even to help them if we are able. Let our Adversaries be as cruel to us as they please, take Delight in seeing us miserable, and increase the Afflictions they have brought upon us, with reproaching us, and exposing us to the Contempt and Scorn of other Men; let them use what Stratagems they will to entrap us, enter into what Combinations and Conspiracies they please to supplant us, and apply what Strength they can to destroy us: It will become us still, when they shall fall into Afflictions, to grieve and be sorry for them, to perform all Offices of Compassion and Charity to them, to pray heartily for them; in doing of all which, we shall find much greater Pleasure and Joy of Heart, than the passionate Man can do in all the Exercise of Revenge, which his corrupt Affections and Opportunity can administer to him. The true Christian can never be dispensed with for want of Charity, be the Object never so unworthy.

This virtuous Temper of Mind and Disposition, makes us fit for another kind of Relief than we can give our selves; and inclines, and even obliges God Almighty to take our Cause into his own Hands; to extend his just Judgment upon those who have proceeded so unjustly against us; and not only to shelter us from that Ruin and Oppression which they have prepared for us, but by his active Power to enable us to drive that Tyranny from us. * *He will send a faintness into the hearts of our enemies, and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee as fleeing from a sword, and they shall fall when none pursueth.* † *He will take the wise in their own craftiness, and they shall meet with darkness in the day-time, and grope in the noon-day as in the night.* Those Devices and Stratagems by which they thought they had best provided for their Security, shall most perplex them, and leave them to themselves; whilst all those who relied, and put their Trust in God, shall have every Day new Arguments to magnify his Mercy and Loving-kindness: And this kind of miraculous Confusion upon them in the highest Article of their Elevation, when with full Joy they feel their Enemies under their Feet; and the redeeming those poor Wretches from their Tyranny, when they are even expiring under it, is one of those seasonable Acts of Power and Mercy that God is most delighted in; and is in truth a greater Instance of his Kindness towards us, than his Preservation of us from any Oppression could have been.

Merciful Father, thou hast beheld the Craft and Subtilty of our Enemies, their Subornation and Perjury, their Cruelty and Violence against us. Let not their Example, and the Injuries they have done us, suppress in our Minds and Affections that Charity towards them, as thou expectest to find in the Hearts of thy Children; but take our Cause into thy Protection, and defend us by thy Power. Let not their Oppression and Rebellion prosper any farther, lest they condemn thy own Power, as they do that of thy Vicegerent; but humble them speedily in such a Manner, that they may have a true Sense of their Wickedness, and make Amends for the Mischief they have done to thy Honour and Glory. Amen.

P S A L M XXXVI.

IT is so very hard a Thing to believe that there are many Atheists in their Understanding, living in those Climates where God hath vouchsafed to be generally spoken of, and his Scriptures have been received with the Solemnity of being publicly confessed to be his Word; that in those Places there should be any, who upon Thoughtfulness and Deliberation do in their Judgments conclude that there is no God; that we may without Excess of Charity hope, and believe that the clear and light Sunshine of Truth and the Gospel hath dispersed, and dissolved, and purged all those Clouds and Fogs of Ignorance and Barbarity; and that every Man's Understanding doth in Truth discern the Light of that Providence, which can no more be hid from his Heart, than the Light of the Sun can be from his Eyes. But we have gotten very little by vindicating our Understandings thus far: What are we the better, if our Judgments be never so well informed of God Almighty, when we are direct Atheists in our Will? What Difference is there between not knowing him, and not fearing him? Nay, were it not much better really to think there is none, than knowing there is one, obstinately to resolve not to think of him at all? It is this Atheism of our Will, that is the most unpardonable Contempt and Affront of God Almighty; when we have Fear and Reverence enough towards great Persons, to keep us from doing any Thing in their Sight which may offend them; and Modesty enough to restrain us from indecent Things in the Sight of those of whom we have neither Fear or Reverence; and yet have the Presumption, and Impudence, and Dishonesty, to give the utmost License to all our Affections and Passions; and spend our Thoughts in nothing else, but how to cherish and foment, and satisfy their Exorbitance, though we know that he is all this Time looking upon those Thoughts, and abhorring those Actions, when we very well know that we are to pass a sad Account for every Indulgence to our Appetite, for every Extravagancy of our Humour, for every Compliance with our Ambition, our Malice, and Revenge, for every Act of Rebellion against our Prince, of Treachery against our Friend, of Uncharitableness and Injustice against our Neighbour; and yet instead of making an Inventory of those Sins, to confess to him, and humble our selves for them, we recollect and remember them to no other Purpose, than to palliate and extenuate them, by fallacious and ridiculous Distinctions to make other Men believe we are not guilty of them; and so propagate them in the speculative Part, though we own our Consciences tell us, that the Practice of them is abominable; and rather endeavour to damn other Men, by justifying what we have done, than we will accuse our selves by an honest and confessed Repentance. With what Face can we approach the Judge, and Support of Truth, Uprightness and Integrity, when we have given up our Hearts to Falshood and Deceit; not being wrought upon and seduced by the Craft of others, but maliciously declined to do well, left off to do that which we knew was our Duty to do? When we have not been surprized by the Heat of our Blood, to an intemperate Action; nor by the Rage and Fury of our Passion hurried to an Act of Blood and Cruelty; but have with all the

the Leisure and Sobriety of Thought, contrived and projected the satisfying our Lusts, or our Ambition; with all the Calmness and Deliberation designed a Rebellion, and Act of Revenge; revolved all the Ways and Means conducing to either, in the easy Posture of our Beds; and slept upon those Considerations, lest through Incogitancy, any Circumstance might be omitted, the Defect whereof would make our Wickedness less compleat?

This wonderful Frowardness in our Affections, and Perverseness and Obstinacy in our Will, had need meet with a Judge of no less Excess in Mercy and Compassion, so much Poison stands in need of a strong Antidote. It is well for us that God's Goodness extends farther than the Malice of the Devil can reach; that if we can raise our selves so high as to be worthy of it as Men, as his noblest and best Workmanship, it can descend to us as Beasts, and so part of his Creation still, and will not suffer us to be destroyed till we are more sensual than they are. If we have not Courage enough from our Innocence and Integrity, to climb up to the Mountain of his Mercy, he will find us out in the Valleys, when we are overwhelmed with Perplexities and Distresses; and rather than we shall be lost, will search lower for us than our Despair can carry us. And if at last we can bring our selves to a due Admiration of his Favour and Goodness towards us, to an Estimation of his Mercy, and to a Desire of being worthy of it, he will supply the Defects with the abundance of his Love, and so take us into his immediate Care and Protection; that we shall not only be sheltered from the Malice and Power of our Enemies, but plentifully supplied with whatsoever we stand in Need of; with such a Plenty, as shall leave us without farther Appetite; or rather, shall so reform our Appetite, as to teach us how gross and insipid all those Things are, upon which we had formerly set our Appetite and Affections: We shall then discern the Difference between the Pleasure of our Pride and Luxury, and the Pleasure of our Innocence and Devotion; between that Light which formerly dazzled our Eyes with vain and sensual Delights, and the Light of a good Conscience, which opens a Prospect to us to behold the Joys of Heaven, and our Creator himself; and shall at one and the same Time find our selves secure from the Attempts which the Pride of our Enemies would make upon us, and from the more dangerous Pride which would naturally result from our own Affections.

Gracious Father, infuse thy gracious Spirit into our Hearts, that whilst we pretend with our Lips to confess and magnify thy Name, we do not by our Actions and Lives declare that we know nothing of thee: Possess us with such a Religious Fear and Reverence towards thee, that what we are afraid to commit before those Persons under or with whom we live, we may not dare to do in thy Sight. Make us strict and severe to our selves, in the Disquisition and Examination, and Enumeration of our Sins, and truly humble, and ingenuous, and penitent, in the Representation of them to thee, that so thou may'st be gracious and merciful, in the Consideration and Remission of them. Make us love and practise Uprightness and Integrity in our Actions, Truth and Simplicity in our Words, and Honesty and Innocency in our Thoughts; and if through the Weakness, Frailty, or Incogitancy of our Nature, we are suddenly carried to some Thoughts, or Words, or Actions, not agreeable

ble to thy Pleasure, let us discern and amend them together; and never fall into that Malice of Heart, as purposely, and upon Deliberation and Contrivance, to decline our Duty to thee, and follow that which is not good. Prevent us by thy Grace from such odious Apostacy, and protect us by thy Power from the Malice, and Cruelty, and Oppression of our Enemies; direct our Hearts and Affections to such a Value of thy Mercy, and such an Understanding of thy Goodness, that having a Contempt of all Things else, we may find all Joy, and Plenty, and Satiety, in the Contemplation of the Joys of Heaven, and in thy good Time be admitted to the full and entire Possession of them, and of thee, and of thy Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

P S A L M XXXVII.

BE not thou envious against evil Men, neither desire to be with them, says * Solomon; indeed it is the natural Effect of Envy, to desire to be in the Condition of those whom we envy. Men rarely envy those who are miserable, be their Virtues what they will; but Prosperity and Glory is still the Object of Envy, and will be sure to find Envyers enough, let it be accompanied with what Guilt and Wickedness soever; though we hate their Persons, and pretend to hate their Crimes, we are emulous of their Condition; and by that Corruption, before we are aware, grow to be reconciled to their Ways, and to their Ends. It is not possible to continue innocent, after we have sucked in this Poison of Envy towards those who prosper wickedly. And yet it may be the best Christian in Distress and Calamities, does not find a greater Difficulty to keep a sure Guard against, and to shut out any Vice from his Bosom, to keep himself innocent from any Temptation, than from the contagious Insinuations of Envy. To despise and abhor a Condition, which makes Men Umpires of the World, enables them to enlarge and contract the Affections of Princes as they please, to incline them to favour and assist this Party against their Inclinations, and restrain them from doing good to those they most desire to oblige; not to envy those Men who have the prodigious Authority and Power to promote whom they love, and to depress and destroy all whom they affect not; to banish Men out of their Country, and to pursue and destroy them in Banishment, as if they were still in their own Dominions or Prisons; I say, not to be a little envious of these Persons, requires more recollected and more abstracted Thoughts, than most Men in all Passions and Perplexities do usually keep about them. The Truth is, no Argumentation of our own, without the wonderful Assistance of God Almighty, and the Influence of his Spirit, can produce such a virtuous Habit of Mind, as will totally exclude this Envy: It must be an entire Confidence in him, and raised by him, that can carry us to such a Level, from whence we may take a clear Prospect, and make a perfect Survey of the Foundations and Superstructures of that Prosperity and Power which we were before so apt to envy, and to be ambitious of; and we shall then improve the Rule, and yet invert the Reason of the Son

6 C

of

* Prov. xxiv. 1.

of *Syrach*, * *Envy not the Glory of a Sinner, for thou knowest not what shall be his End*; and shall therefore not envy his Glory, because we do know what shall be his End; that his End shall be Destruction and Infamy in this World, and eternal Sorrow and Pain in that which is to come.

When by our Devotion and Prayer to God Almighty, and his Acceptance of us, we are thus qualified, we shall discern the Difference and Inequality between the Happiness which those impetuous and impetuous Transgressors of the Laws of God and Man, and Contemners of both enjoy, with what Success soever; and theirs who preserve, and observe inviolably the Rules of Conscience and Integrity, though they are thereby, for some Time, exposed as a Prey to the other. We shall then consider, how foolish and how mad a Thing it were, to envy the Wealth of a Pirate, who being possessed of the Spoils of all Nations, is sure himself to be made a Prey on all Shores, to have his Wealth taken from him, and himself executed as a Malefactor and Enemy to Mankind; that the Condition of all fortunate and prosperous Sinners is upon the Matter the same. If the Winds are so favourable to them, that they escape all Wrecks at Sea, or meet with no other Pirates more fierce and powerful than themselves; if they miscarry not in their Enterprizes in this World, and upon Differences and Emulations with Men of the same Desires and Ambitions, are not disappointed of what they propose, they shall no sooner come on Shore, depart this Life, (and every Gust of Wind will drive them to that Land) but they shall be hurried to a Judgment Seat, where they receive a Sentence of eternal Poverty, of perpetual Want of all they before enjoyed, and upon which their Hearts are set, and of eternal Torment for the Pleasure they took during the short Time of their Excess. The extream Agony and sharp Pain the oppressed Man endures in his Banishment or Imprisonment, or (which the good Man feels more) in the Violation of the publick Religion, and of the publick Justice, and the Persecution of all Piety and Integrity, may make the Time seem long that ill Men are permitted to exercise that Tyranny; but that Sense proceeds from the Anguish of what they suffer; not that the others Power is really of a long Continuance, it may look pleasantly, but it hath no Root; they have but the verdure of Grass, or beautiful Herbs, which the first rude Wind ploughs up, and the first Frost nips and discolours, and the second kills and destroys; any Check in the Career of their Fortune dismays them, a little Adversity breaks their Spirits, and a short Continuance of it drives them into Despair: Whereas the just and upright Man spreads like the Palm, and is rooted like the Cedar; gives Shelter and Shadow, and Comfort, under the extended Arms of his Charity; and when he hath nothing else to give, gives Counsel, and supports others with his Conversation and Example: And though he may be beaten upon by Storms, assaulted by the Malice and Defamation of detracting and violent Tongues, and it may be some Limbs broken by stronger and more violent Tempests; lose a Brother, or a Son, by the Power and Fury of his bloody and merciless Enemies; and though he may seem to be a little shaken, and to bow and groan under the Weight of a tyrannical Persecution, to be so far carried away, or sunk with the Torrent, that he makes no Shew of resisting or contending with it: Yet his Root is so strong and deep, his Confidence so fixed in God, and in his Promises, that he is never stirred, or moved, from the Place where

where he was planted, keeps himself to the true Principles of his Religion to God, of his Allegiance to his King, and of Justice and Charity to all Men; and in the end finds himself superior to that proud Storm that threatned him; sees his Enemies miserable, scattered and pursued by all Men, and more by their own Guilt and Despair; feels his broken Limbs to grow again with greater Vigor; all those Blessings in his Fortune, and his Family, which his Enemies had robbed and bereaved him of, restored in the same Kind to him, or better in their stead; and all this settled on him in such a Perpetuity, that when he shall be even weary of the Pleasure of this World, he shall find such a Succession in the next, as shall increase his Happiness, and make it as lasting as the Heavens themselves.

It was a very pertinent and a comfortable Question or Proposition, though it might at that Time be pressed with some Arrogance and Uncharitableness, which one of *Job's* too imperious Friends administered to him; * *Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent, or where were the Righteous cut off?* Aut quando recti deleti sunt? says the vulgar *Latin*: The Persecution may be so sharp, that we may be easily cut off; cut off upon the Scaffolds by the Axe, for not being Rebels; cut off by Restraints and Imprisonments in our own Country, for conscientiously observing the lawful Oaths we are lawfully bound to, and refusing to renounce the Allegiance and Subjection we owe to our Sovereign Lord the King; and cut off in Banishment by Famine, for being Protestants, and refusing to change our Religion, and profess another which we believe not to be the Right; but blotted out we shall not, we cannot be: What we do, and what we suffer, will appear so full, so fair, and so legible a Character, that all the Malice of our Enemies shall not be able with their Calumnies to blot it out, or to deface it; but Posterity will read it, and magnify us with a just and honourable Fame and Mention, and thank God for our Example; and he will be sure to read it, and by his Goodness to give us Patience to support us in what we suffer, and to reward us for it. We ought not to be terrified with any Streights and Necessities we are in for doing our Duty, nor over-apprehensive that those Necessities will grow insupportable; the little we have preserved by our Vigilance, or acquired by our Industry, or received from the Charity of others, is sent from God; and when once he begins to send, his Arms are not streightned, he sends as much as is precisely necessary: Whereas the Plenty and Wealth of our Enemies, is like the Wealth of Conjurers, rather fantastick Representations and Apparitions of Wealth, by the Illusion of the Devil, from whom it is sent with the Permission, but against the Will of Divine Providence, than any real and substantial Support, and vanishes accordingly, and leaves the deluded Owners frightened and distracted with the Imagination of their Abundance, and languishing with the same Wants which they have caused and derided in others. If we are brought so low, that we seem even incapable of Strength to rise again, and our Enemies proceed so victoriously, that they meet with no Resistance or Opposition that is able to stand in their Way, it may be some Comfort to us to remember, that we have seen their Swords turned upon themselves; that those who have been the chief Contrivers and Promoters of our Misery, have been destroyed by them whose Designs they have advanced; and we do not know how far God will pro-

sec'ate

* Job iv. 7.

secure that Method of destroying them towards our Restoration. It may be, how innocently soever we behave our selves in our present Sufferings, and how unjustly soever they have been brought upon us by the Malice of other Men, yet the former Sins of our Life have been so great, that God will not deliver us from these Miseries for those Sins, but that they shall expiate and discharge the Debt we were to pay for those Transgressions; and we have then no Reason to complain of the Composition, and may well thank them, who against their Wills have brought us to such a Promotion. It may be the Sins of other Men may be so great, and of so contagious a Nature, that the Punishment may not be proportionable, except we are likewise involved in the Judgment. The Riot and Prodigality of the Children may be such, as that God may find it necessary to impoverish the Father, without which somewhat would descend to them to cherish their Excesses. The Rebellion and Wickedness of a Nation may be so odious to God Almighty, that he will no more vouchsafe to give them a King to reign over them; and then both the Prince, and such Subjects who continue faithful to him, must be involved in that Punishment. The Country could not be sufficiently scourged for its Cruelty and Barbarity, if it should be still permitted to be the Seat of a gracious Prince; nor could he bring a compleat Desolation upon it, if he suffered honest Men to return to it: Yet he will supply that King, if he puts his entire Confidence in him, and keeps himself firm to his Service, with a nobler Government and Jurisdiction, with the Sovereignty over his own Passions and Affections, which very few have attained to in the Royal Throne, and make his Comportment fuller of Decency and Majesty, and put his Mind in possession of greater Tranquility, and at last crown him with greater Glory, than if his Peace and Quiet had been never interrupted by that unworthy Defection: And they who for being honest Men shall be condemned to Banishment, if they continue constant to that Truth for which they suffer, besides the Peace of Conscience, which will keep them warm in the coldest Winter, and fat in the greatest Scarcity, they shall find that Charity and Benignity, and Reverence from Strangers, which their own Country owed, and denied them; at least, they shall feel such a Refreshment from the Cause of their Want, as no Plenty could carry with it: And if they come at last to be that President, which *David's* great Experience never met with, to be forsaken to that Degree, as to be forced to beg their Bread, they shall not be ashamed in that evil Time, there shall no just Reproach attend their Poverty, and they shall even that way, without Blushes, be preserved from Famine, and other Men prosper by the Alms they bestow upon them. Let the worst fall out that can, *nunquam erunt deleti*, the pious and worthy, and conscientious Sufferer, shall at first inherit the Fate of the Wise Man in the Son of *Syrach*; * *Many shall commend his Understanding, and so long as the World endureth it shall not be blotted out; his Memorial shall not depart away, and his Name shall live from Generation to Generation: If he die, he shall leave a greater Name than a Thousand, and if he live, he shall increase it.*

Let us therefore make the right Use of our Afflictions, improve our selves, and grow the better by them; learn, and study, and practise that Christian Virtue of Patience, which we are sure is not only necessary for the Condition we are in, but as necessary for that Condition

I

* Eccl. xxxix. 9, 11.

own Wishes would carry us to, will not only mitigate, and even take away the Pain of our Sufferings, and so disappoint our Enemies of their greatest Triumph, which consists not in the Damage they bring upon us, but in the Sense they see we have of that Damage; but take away their Appetite of adding to our Sufferings, when they see we are not broken by them. Wise Travellers take great Care to provide such Coin as is current in all the Countries they are to pass through: No Coin is so universally current as Patience is; no Antidote so precious against any Poison; no Provision so necessary against any Want: If we had no need of it in our Misery, and want of Meat, and the disconsolateness that attends that Condition, we should have Use enough for it in our Riots and Excesses, and the Diseases which flow from those Distempers; if we needed it not in our Afflictions and Adversities, to support us from the Contempt and Reproach, which they who are too hard for us, will be sure to lay upon us, we shall be sure to want it in our Plenty and Prosperity, to shelter us from the Emulation and Envy of those who believe they deserve that Portion better than we, and so are always in Combination against us. That Prince who does not want it to enable him to bear the Sedition, or Insurrection, or Rebellion of his Subjects, shall have need enough of it, to endure the Negligence and Impertinence, and Insolence of his Servants. The Loss of a Wife, a Son, a Friend, will require our Patience; a Cough, an Ague, a Fever, instantly destroys us, if we have it not. It is the great End and Labour of the Chymists, to extract such a Spirit and Quintessence out of any Subject they think worthy of their Art, as by its Subtlety and Activity may have so far the Predominance over any Composition into which it shall be injected, as to bring the Nature of the other to a Compliance, if not a full Subjection to it; and if Gold be to be made, it must be by that Medium. Patience is that Spirit extracted to our Hands, if we will take the Pains to apply it; which being cast into the fullest and bitterest Portion of Affliction our Enemies have administered to us, will expel or allay all that Bitterness, change the Nature and Malignity of it into a Cordial, by which we shall find our Understandings improved, our Health bettered, and all that is good in us amended: And therefore we are very foolish, as well as unfortunate, if we practise not so known and so sovereign a Cure and Remedy.

GOOD God, into how great a depth of Misery soever thou pleasest to cast us, and to how high a pitch soever of Prosperity thou dost please to raise our Enemies, infuse thy Grace into our Hearts, that we may never be so envious of their Fortunes as to incline to their Faults, but give us Patience to submit to thy Will, and to wait thy Leisure for our Deliverance. Let us commit all that we have, and all that we are, to thee, and trust in thee to bring that to pass which thou knowest best for us. Vouchsafe to behold the Designs which are against us, and the Contempt and Scorn that our Enemies have of us, and disappoint them of their Success in our Destruction. Let us not be ashamed of the Poverty they have brought upon us, but magnify thy Mercy, that we have hitherto escaped Famine, and are yet alive to praise thee. Order our Steps in thy Path, that we may not be weary or discouraged in the Performance of our Duty to thee, or the Obligations of a good Conscience to those whom thou hast appointed to Rule over us; and uphold and support

port us, as well against the Temptations of our own Passions, and Appetites, and Affections, as against the Power, and Cunning, and Malice of our Enemies; and whatsoever Difficulties and Distresses we meet in our way, let our End be Peace, in the Fruition of the Joys of Heaven, which thy Son hath purchased for us. Amen.

P S A L M XXXVIII.

THE Arrows of the Almighty are within me, the Poison whereof drinketh up my Spirit, the Terrors of God do set themselves in Array against me*. says the patient Man, when he would excuse his Passion by the Terror and Agony he was in. He had Patience enough for the Oppression and Rapine of his Enemies, for the Unkindness and Reproach of his Friends, and for the Cunning and Malice of the Devil; but he was transported with the Sense of God's Anger against him, he could not bear that with Temper; the Apprehension that all those Miseries, of so piercing and destroying a Nature in themselves, fell upon him, not only by God's Permission, to try and humble him, but proceeded directly from his Indignation and Resolution to destroy him, almost confounded him: When they appeared no more the Arrows of his Enemies, levelled and shot at his Greatness and Prosperity, the Enterprizes and Designs of ill Men, suborned by the Devil against him, but the Artillery of God himself, discharged upon him in his greatest Displeasure and Fury, he was able to stand the Shock no longer, and thought he had some Reason to pour out his Complaints and his Lamentations with a little more Earnestness; and that the Grief and Trouble of his Mind might excuse the want of that Order, and Method, and Deliberation, which the Ease, and calm Condition, and disputing Humour of his Friends, who were only healthy Spectators of what he suffered, reproachfully required from him. We want this Apprehension (and the pious Passion that would attend it) of God's Anger, and find out a Hundred Reasons for any Affliction that befalls us, in the Pride and Envy, and Injustice of Men, before we resort to the least Consideration that they flow from his Displeasure towards us; and are so far from being terrified or perplexed with the Sense of his Anger, that we seem to be of Opinion that he cannot be angry at all; otherwise we would use the same Providence to prevent it, and the same Diligence and Application to pacify it, as we do towards the Anger of those whom we think able or willing to do us Good or Harm. How are we afraid of the Anger of that great Man from whom we expect some good Turn, which, it may be, he never means to do us? What Trouble and Unquietness of Mind do we sustain, if we have done any Thing which may accidentally provoke or displease him? How do we undo it with our Submission and Acknowledgment? When it may be every Thing displeases him, but what we ought not to do; and yet rather than he shall be angry, we will do that too; and rather than not be acceptable to him, comply neither with the Dictates of our Conscience, nor Conclusions of our Understanding. That we have not a Reverence proportionable towards him who created us, a Fear of his Anger, Trem-

Trembling and Consternation when we have done any ill Thing to provoke it, an humble and a bleeding Heart to reconcile and atone it, can proceed from nothing (since we have Fear enough of whatsoever we believe will hurt us) but a stupid Incogitancy and Inconsideration of him, or (which is very little worse) a sottish Conclusion that he cannot be angry at all.

It is no wonder, when we do not at all fear the Terror and insupportableness of God's Anger, that we do not at all feel the Smart and Pain of our own Sins; if we had the one, we could not be without the other: Then, the Punishment we underwent for any Sin, how hard soever it were pressed upon us, would not be so painful as the Sin itself: Nay, the Punishment would to such a sensible Patient give some Ease, being in some Degree an Expiation for the Offence. The loose and licentious Person would find as much Agony from the Corruption of his Flesh, and as sharp a Pain in his Bones, whilst he is busy in his Contrivances and Stratagems to satisfy his Lust, as he undergoes afterwards in Flesh or Bones, from the foul Exercise of his Sin. The proud and unjust Oppressor would find more Torment in the Act of his Oppression, and would himself be more broken with the Violence he offers and executes upon innocent and upright Men, than the miserable Subjects of his Rage and Uncharitableness in their deepest Sufferings can be. The wicked rebellious Person would feel more Grief, and Weakness, and Decay within his own Breast, from his first holding up his Hands against his Sovereign, and from every Reproach and Contumely he hath cast out against his Sacred Person and Power, than all the Widows, and Fatherless, and Childless can feel, who have been spoiled and desolated from his Rebellion. No Wounds or Diseases are so grievous and painful to the Body, as the Sense of committing a great and enormous Crime is to the Mind that is in the least degree imbued with any Love or Fear of God: The hollowness of the Eye, and Decay of the Countenance, which proceeds from bodily Sickness, is Beauty to that Paleness, and Wanness, and Ghastliness, which is presented to every pious Soul from the Conscience of a notorious Transgression. When we are overwhelmed with the Custom of sinning, that we take no Notice when we do amiss, and through Incogitancy, or Remissness, or Obstinacy, do not revolve the Ill we do, and purge our selves from the foul Guilt of them by Acknowledgment, and Repentance, and Reparation; we are no sooner awaked out of that Lethargy, by the least Influence of that good Spirit, but the Smell and Rankness of those neglected and forgotten Sins, is more noysome and suffocating to us, than the Corruption and Putrefaction from any fleshly Wounds can be. The Mind is as much more subtil than the Body in the Sense of Pain, as in any Operation.

But as this antecedent Fear of God's Anger, and this subsequent Feeling of the Smart of our own Sins, bring with it much Trouble and Pain to us, so it carries the Cure and Remedy with it too. It is like the Pain the impostumated Patient suffers in the lancing his Sore, to let out that Corruption which begets the Pain: It gives Smart and Ease at once, and exposes our Wounds to that skilful Hand that can only bind them up: It disposes us to put all our Trust and Confidence in the Goodness and Mercy of God, and it disposes him to take Compassion upon us, to be reconciled to us, and to take us into his Protection, and then to shew how little Impression any outward Afflictions can make upon us; when

when our Mind hath attained that Ease and Security, we are very little troubled with the worst that can befall us. Let those who should be our Friends join with those who persecute us, or at least, for fear of them, withdraw themselves, and take no notice of our Sufferings to relieve us: Let the virulent Tongues of ill Men traduce us with what Calumnies they please, and their malicious Designs never cease to pursue us; we shall sit still as unconcerned, and patiently wait his Leisure, who is able to bridle those Tongues, and controul those Designs, and will the sooner do both, for the Delight they take in our Adversity, and for our Submission to his own Time, and Measure of our Correction:

*M*erciful Father, we tremble at thy Anger, and are almost consumed with thy heavy Displeasure; the sharp Sense of our grievous Sins against thee, afflicts us more than the Punishment we have undergone for those Sins; we are oppressed and confounded with the Multitude and the Weight of them, and too late find, that the Endeavours to palliate and conceal them from thee, hath caused them to putrify in our own Bosom, the Noysomeness whereof exceedingly offends and afflicts us: And since we have frowardly declined the Light of thy Word, the Light of our own Reason and Understanding is gone from us, and we wander in Darknes, as Men who have no Eyes: Whither shall we carry this infected, leprous, and loathsome Soul, but to thee, who art the Redeemer of Souls? Take it, we beseech thee, into thy Protection, and wash it in the Fountain of thy Mercy and Innocence, that it be no more capable of Pollution. Seal a Pardon unto us for what is past, and for the Time to come infuse thy Grace into us, that we may quietly and patiently endure the Afflictions which are yet to come for our past Offences, and in thy good Time put a period to the Pride and Power of our malicious and merciless Persecutors. Amen.

P S A L M XXXIX.

I Will speak that I may be refreshed*, says the wisest and the least faulty of Job's Friends, when he was wearied and tired with the Impertinence and Insolence of the others: *Eloquar ut respiratio sit mihi*, says one Translation, *I will speak that I may breathe*. It is a very great Pain to hear Men speak ignorantly, and impertinently, and wickedly, and not to have Liberty to controul or disprove them; no Suffocation more unpleasant than such a forced Silence. To hear virtuous and worthy Actions declaimed and inveighed against, and virtuous and worthy Men censured, traduced and reproached, for doing what they ought, and by their Duties are obliged to do, whilst unlawful and sinful Actions are justified and commended, and their Abettors magnified and extolled, and not to dare, upon the Penalty of Life or Liberty, to reply to those malicious Discourses: To be forced to hear our natural Sovereign, an innocent and pious Prince, slandered and accused with Reproaches, Calumnies and Lies, Aspersions notoriously false, and easy to be made appear to be so, and to be compelled to keep Silence.

* Job xxxii. 20,

Silence : To see and hear God himself profaned and blasphemed, his Omnipotence questioned and slighted, his Justice disputed, and his Anger derided; to hear Murther, Treason and Rebellion, vindicated and maintained, as committed and propagated by the Infusion and Direction of his Spirit, and his blessed Name invoked and challenged, for the Defence and Support of such a Mass of Wickedness, and not to be able to open a Man's Mouth against this horrid Blasphemy, is not only more Vexation, and Grief, and Torment of Mind, but really a more sensible, a sharper, and a more piercing Pain to the inward and nobler Parts of a wise and an honest Man, than what the outward Limbs are subject to by the Gout, Tooth-ach, or Rack it self. * *Then, said I, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name, but his word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay, for I heard the defaming of many, &c.* says the Prophet *Jeremiah*, after he had been disgracefully beaten, and ignominiously imprisoned for performing his Duty. No Heat so raging and insupportable, as that in the Bosom of an honest Man, upon the doing any Thing which he ought not to have done, or refraining from that which his Conscience informs him he ought to do.

Indeed our Condition may be such, that we may be forbid and restrained from speaking in our own Interest, when our Reputations, and Fortunes, and Lives, are exposed to the Calumnies, and Oppression, and Violence of those who malign and persecute us; and our speaking may be to so little Purpose, that we may in Discretion forbear it for some Time in the Case of the Publick, when it is evident the speaking Truth, and Reason, may in that Article, and in that Place, do more Harm than Good, and that it may hopefully be reserved for another Season. † *When the Lord hath poured out upon a people the spirit of a deep sleep, and hath closed their eyes, when he hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof,* we may stay till they are awakened by what they feel, before we can hope that they will be informed by what they hear. In the mean Time, we need keep no such Silence as may perplex and disturb us; we may, in spite of all Restraint, breathe out our Complaints to God, of all that Folly, and Perverseness, and Wickedness, and beseech him to instruct, and humble, and reform that Spirit. We may tell all those whom Ambition makes to sweat and bleed for Offices and Honour, and those who rebel to get Power and Command, and make their way through a Sea of Blood and Rapine to grasp an Authority which belonged not to them; that all their Contention is for that which they cannot keep when they have got it, and which is of no Value if it could be kept: That they struggle for that which really is not, as Children quarrel to enjoy that which appears only by the reflex of a Glass, and hath no Substance of it self. That the Offices they usurp by Force, and the Estates they have extorted and heaped together by Rapine, appear glorious only by the reflex of their Pride, and their Covetousness, and as soon vanish as their Dream. That if they were of a Nature valuable and durable, that it could be of no more Importance to them, than a Present of rich Cloaths, and gorgeous Apparel, to a Man on his Death-bed, or going to Execution, they cannot enjoy them above a Moment; and then what they have purchased at so dear a Price as their eternal Peace, shall be either forfeited to the Law which they have transgressed, or wasted by the Riot

6 E

and

* Jer. xx. 9, 10.

† Isa. xxix. 10. xix. 14.

and Prodigality of a dissolute Heir, or it may be ravished from that Heir by some Creature raised by that Father's Unrighteousness. We may tell our selves, that that Life we are so unwilling to part with, and would prolong by such Sollicitation and Importunity, and Submission against our Reason, and against our Honour, and it may be against our Conscience, will not probably last so long, as we have been in that unpleasant Pursuit to preserve it; or if it do that, the Agony of buying it so dear, will make it so full of Uneasiness and Perplexity, however, that the utmost that it can continue, is not worthy of the Name of Time, in Comparison of that Eternity which depends upon the innocent spending or prolonging it. That the Estate which we labour to redeem with so much Artifice and Condescension, from those who have usurped it from us, and who will never part with it, except we contract to take some of their Guilt into the Bargain, is not even in point of good Husbandry worth the Price we are to pay for it; that our Wives and Children are not the better provided for, and that they will be the sooner Beggars by that Accumulation; since such Purchases carry always with them a Curse, that still hovers over the Heads of the Possessors.

If we would break the Silence of our most melancholy and confounding Afflictions with such wholesome Discourses, instead of murmuring at our Misfortunes, and extolling the Value of what we have lost by our Integrity; nay, if we did not invert these Discourses to our selves, and really believe that the Pleasures and Plenty of this Life are only Real and Substantial, and those of the next Imaginary and Fantastick, it were not possible we should set our Hearts so much upon the one, and so absolutely neglect, if not condemn the other: We would bear our Losses and Calamities with Chearfulness, as the gentle Strokes of his Hand for some Excess or Restraint when we were in Possession of what he hath now suffered others to take from us: We would look upon the Contempt and Derision we are fallen into with those who it may be were inferior to us in Interest and Understanding, as a seasonable Punishment upon us for our neglecting, or not enough considering his Power and Wisdom, which would have supported and directed us: We should not be so much confounded with any of his Judgments, as when he punishes our committing one Sin, with an Inclination to another; our Riots and Surfeits, with an Appetite to Lust and Uncleaness; our Malice and Ambition, with a Resolution of Treason and Rebellion; our Murmuring and Impatience, with a stupid Submission to, and Compliance with those who exercise the Tyranny. God's Hand is never so destroying, nor the Beauty of the Creature so entirely defaced and dried up, as when he makes a Progress in Sin, the Punishment of Sin. We would conclude that there is no Happiness in this Life, but in what is a Harbinger for the other, in our Devotion to God Almighty, that he will restrain us from Sin, in our humble Submission to him, and hearty Sorrow for the Sins we do commit, and in his Pardon and Remission of them; such a Remission of them, to the Peace and Quiet of our Consciences in this World, that we may have Courage and Confidence enough to appear before him in the next.

GRacious Father, infuse into our Hearts a due, and full, and devout Consideration of the necessary and unavoidable Shortness, and the evident Vanity of this Life, and of the esteemed Pleasures and Bene-

Benefits of this World, and thereupon suppress all inordinate Affection and Appetite in us toward such transitory Delight, and work in us a true Value and Estimation of that Eternity of Joy and Sorrow which attends us in the next; and to that Purpose dispose our entire Hope and Confidence towards thee, and all our Endeavours to please thee. Mercifully forgive all our Sins, and remove those heavy Afflictions from us, which are the strokes of thy Hand for those Sins. Hear our earnest Prayer, and be not silent to the Grief and Lamentation of our Hearts; but if it be thy blessed Will, restore us to our Country; and to that Peace and Happiness in this World, which thou hast suffered us to be robbed of: However, let us not fail of that true Happiness of living with thee in the next. Amen.

P S A L M XL.

LET us be never so upright in our Actions, and innocent in our Lives, let God's Purposes be never so gracious and merciful towards us, we shall still have need of Patience: We are not to look that every Petition we shall make, every Prayer we shall offer up, how devout soever, shall be presently granted, presently hearkened unto, it is enough that we shall be heard at last. The good Christian would have too pleasant a Life, if he were not put to wait as much, and to wait as long as other Men; we should not be enough delighted with the Exercise of Prayer, which gives us more inward Joy and Happiness than the Things we commonly pray for can do, if we too soon received the Effect of our Prayer; how long soever we attend his Leisure, and how pressing soever our Miseries seem to us, we may be sure our Deliverance is only therefore deferred, because it would not be good for us to be sooner delivered. We may have our Confidence in God mingled with some Project of our own, and so pray to him to assist some probable Design we our selves have contrived for our Deliverance; and if we prosper in it, we shall be forwarder to magnify our own Wit and Conduct, than his Goodness and Protection; and so if we get that way out of any Distress and Calamity, our Feet will stand upon such slippery Ground when we are out, our Confidence will be so ill placed, that we shall very probably fall quickly in again, and be plunged deeper than we were before: God therefore frequently suffers us to be depressed with great Afflictions, till we have spent and struggled away all our Strength, all our Inventions and Devices, and are reduced to that Weakness, that we have no Stratagem left to help our selves; that the Power of those who were willing to relieve us, is broken and destroyed, and our Enemies in full Possession of all that Security that their own Hearts can desire: And then, when we are humble enough to trust him entirely, thoroughly prepared to confess the Vanity and Sottishness of any other Dependance, and to magnify and celebrate his Power and Mercy, as our only Refuge, he will take us out of the deepest Gulphs of Adversity that our Enemies Rage and Cruelty hath thrown us into, and out of the dark and confused Designs of our vain Hopes and Presumption, which stick as close to us as the other; and he will fix us upon such a Rock of Submission, and Dependance, and Confidence on him, that we shall

shall be no more shaken with the proud Threats of the most prosperous Sinners, nor moved by any other Suggestions, but such as proceed from Truth, and a good Conscience.

As we may piously undervalue all the Favours and Mercies which God hath bestowed on us, (though the Multitude of them is innumerable, and the Value inestimable,) in respect of that exalted Work of submitting his Son to die for us; so we may, with Reference to his precious Death and Passion, delight our selves equally with what he instructed us in his Life, as with what he merited for us in his Death; since if he had left us no Light to follow his Precepts and Example, the other would not have been of great Avail to us. That he vouchsafed to free us from the Miseries and Perplexities of those many Sacrifices, Offerings, and Rites, and Ceremonies, and to open our Ears to such a clear Hearing and Understanding of our own Obligations, and what he expects from us; that if we fail in the Performance of those Christian Duties of our Life which he requires from us, it will rather proceed from Perverseness of our Wills, than from Corruption of our Judgments. If we set our Hearts upon it, and really delight in doing well, we shall arrive at such a Perfection as shall go for Current with him: But then he expects that we shall so far gratify his Pains, as not to make that hard which he hath made easy, not to perplex our selves in Performance of our Duty, with sacrificing to our Interest, our Security, our Ease, and Conveniency, when he hath abolished those Sacrifices which might have perplexed us in the understanding of our Duty; when he hath given us the Grace to know the Truth, and the Inclination to follow it, that we have the Courage to profess and avow it, and the Charity, and the Industry to rectify and inform other Men in the Practice of it; and that we do not, for fear of being Losers by it, conceal our true Opinions, or neglect to improve them, much less comply with those who endeavour and profess to suppress the Truth. The Power of our Enemies may be so great, as to restrain us from propagating our Integrity by our Counsel or Conversation, but it will be always in our Power to avow it in our own Profession and Practice; nor can any Danger excuse us for disavowing, much less renouncing it. * *They that forsake the Law praise the wicked, but such as keep the Law contend with them; says Solomon.* If all the Armies which should defend it are defeated, and all Magistrates who should support and execute it are suppressed, every honest Man that stoutly professes it, keeps the War on Foot, continues his Claim on the Behalf of God and Truth, and keeps the Enemy from an entire Possession of his wicked Conquests.

If we have this necessary Christian Courage, God will not withhold any of those Graces and Favours that are necessary to support it, nor suffer those Calamities which threaten to overwhelm us, nor the Conscience of our Sins and Weaknesses to distract us. Our Enemies shall be grieved, and vexed, and tormented, with the View and Envy of our Constancy, and even bear a kind of Reverence to us, whilst they persecute us; and when their Pride and Confidence of destroying us is at highest, he will by some extraordinary and unlooked for Judgment, bring them into such a Condition, that they shall find themselves in all that Misery, and greater, they had unmercifully brought us to; and the Example of our Courage and Behaviour, our Patience and Temper, whilst we suffer and are afflicted, and our Modesty and Humility when

* Prov. xxviii. 4.

we are delivered, our Zeal and Anger against those who persecute us whilst they prosper and have Power over us, and our Charity and Compassion towards them when they are brought as low as we were, and when we have it in our Power to take Revenge of them, shall more reform Mens Manners, and convert more Men to an Acknowledgment and magnifying of the Goodness, and Mercy, and Power of heavenly Providence, than any Current of Prosperity and Success could do; and we can never take half that Content and Comfort, and Joy of Heart in the Children of our Body, how good, and how happy soever it shall please God to make them, as we shall feel from the Progeny which our Counsel and Virtue hath begot to a true Knowledge and Understanding how they ought to live here, that they may live for ever hereafter.

Merciful God, give us Patience to wait till thou please to relieve us, and Devotion and Zeal to cry unto thee till thou hear us. Let us not be weary of waiting, nor be thou slow of hearing, but in Mercy deliver us from those horrible Oppressions which lie so heavy on us: We do from our Hearts acknowledge, that all Dependence upon any worldly Help is vain, and that it is only in thy Power to give us Help. Take Pity upon us therefore, O thou Preserver of all those who put their Trust in thee; respect not the Proud, nor such as turn aside to Lies; give us the true Spirit of Obedience, chearfully to do what thou enjoimest us to do, and chearfully to suffer what it is thy Pleasure we should suffer. Let us not be ashamed or afraid to profess thy Truth, whatsoever Inconveniences or Dangers threaten us by so doing; but give us Courage to appear the same in our Actions as we are in our Hearts, believing that our whole Duty does not consist in being innocent our selves, but as well in endeavouring to our utmost Power to confirm those who are in the right, and to reform the Actions and Lives of those who do not what they ought to do: Make us Examples of Integrity in our Conversation, and make us likewise Examples of thy Mercy in a speedy Deliverance from the Affliction and Misery we have so long undergone, and let that thy Mercy as well convert as disappoint our cruel Adversaries. Amen.

P S A L M XLI.

Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him, the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widows heart to sing for joy,* Job, when he would sum up the greatest Happiness he had enjoyed the Time of his Prosperity. God hath not acknowledged himself to be so much obliged in our Exercise of any Christian Virtue, as in our Charity, and giving Alms to the Poor; and indeed the Practice of any other Duty is not so evident to be for God's Sake, as this of relieving the Poor. We may live with great Temperance and Sobriety, abstain from all Excess in point of Diet, and from all Uncleaness in point of Chastity, and all this in order rather to the Health of our Body than our Soul, and to comply with the Prescription of our natural, not our spiri-

spiritual Physician. We may make great Shew of Humility, in order to our Ambition, and by that Stair hope to ascend to a Superiority over others. We may be very patient out of our moral Reason, and Observation and Experience that nothing is got by Impatience, and it may be have never the more hearty Submission to the good Pleasure of God, or the more Confidence in his Mercy: Nay, we may practise several Branches of Charity it self, without any great Charity to him to whom our Charity, in the first place, ought always to be directed. We may be kind to some Men who are, for the present, in Affliction, with Confidence that they will be shortly able to pay us Interest in the like Offices, and so make our Charity a Stratagem to promote and advance us. We may upon our Death-beds give what we must leave behind us to some pious Work, not out of Piety towards God, but Displeasure to our Heir, and only to disinherit him; but we can have no Design in giving Alms to poor and disconsolate Wretches, who can make us no Return but in their Prayers, if we distribute them with that Simplicity and Secrecy as Alms ought to be bestowed, but to do that which is acceptable to God Almighty, and purely to do good for his Sake.

It is true, there ought to be Discretion and Consideration in the giving of Alms; a profuse scattering amongst loose and vicious Persons, or an unthrifty wasting upon others, though in Misery, more than our Fortune can bear, to the Prejudice of those who are more immediately to be provided for by us, as our Wives, and Children, is not Charity; yet we must as much take Heed, that we do not upon too much considering, too severe an examining of the Merit and Virtue of Men in Necessity, and of the Causes which have brought them to it, that upon too anxious a Computation of our own Stock, that it will not hold out so long as we are like to be without further Supply, think our selves absolved from giving at all; that must not be the Result of our Consideration, no Blessing will attend such Providence. It is a very comfortable Thing to be able to relieve an honest Man, who is upon the point of starving, with such a Proportion as may keep him from future Wants, and enable him with his Industry to live well, and to be helpful to others; and no question God expects even such a Proportion from many Men, whom he hath liberally supplied upon many Occasions; and it may be, such a compleat work of Charity to take an honest Man, whom Want and Necessity hath reduced to the very brink of Despair, and to furnish him with so much as with his honest Management may make his Condition prosperous, is one of the pleasantest Things to a virtuous and noble Mind, and the nearest an Act of Creation human Nature is capable of. Yet in this Extent of our Charity, though we were never so able, we ought to consider the Object very well, and be sure that it be such a one, whose Necessity is only his Misfortune, not his Fault, and who will apply our Alms to the good End it is intended. But let his Wickedness be what it will, his Wants may be so extreme and visible, that we have an Obligation to extend our Alms to him: If he be worthy of Death for the most hainous Crime that ever hath been committed, we are not to suffer him to perish by Famine, (if for no other Reason) that he may be preserved for Justice. To cloathe the Naked, and to feed the Hungry, is an Office of Humanity, and a Debt due to the Image of our Maker. Then in the Survey of our own Abilities we may easily be, and naturally are too apt to put our own Necessities, or our own Apprehension of Necessity in the way, to keep us from

from relieving that of other Men; whereas in Truth, the Defect is only in our Will and Disposition, there being few who are willing, and not able to give: He who can himself live a Week without Alms, can very well give Alms half that Week; and it is the most prudent way to increase and prolong his Store: God doth exceedingly bless such Compassion, and will never suffer the Heart that is really and truly charitable, to want Fuel to maintain that Fire, not to have wherewithal to be charitable; he readily hears every grateful Prayer that is poured out on our Behalf, by those who have been refreshed and preserved by our Christian Bounty; and if our selves fall into any Affliction or Calamity, he comforts and supports us in it, and gives our Mind greater Ease from the Conscience of having exercised that Virtue to our utmost Power, than our sick Body can receive by any Application soever. No Pillow so soft to rest on, as the Conscience of having been kind and merciful to the Fatherless and the Needy.

It is one of our best Titles and Claims we have to God's Mercy, that we are Poor, and in Misery, and it must be one of the best Arguments we can use to him to dispense that Mercy to us, that we have relieved those to our utmost Power who have been miserable. He does for the most part use that Method and Order in rewarding, as he does in punishing, by Retaliation; as he commonly punishes Men by the same Vices which they have practised to the Prejudice and Damage of others; him who is disobedient to his Father, by the Disobedience of a Son of his own, and the like; so he rewards those who according to their weak Ability have served him, the same way they have served him best. If we have been very charitable and compassionate towards others who have lain under any kind of heavy Sufferings, he will stir up others to perform the like Offices to us when we suffer. If we have been free from flandering, and detracting from the Reputation of others, he will cause other Mens speaking ill of us, not to turn to our Prejudice. If we have dealt clearly, and openly, and honestly with all Men, he will preserve us from the malicious Whispers, and secret Devices and Imaginations of those who contrive our Ruin, and raise up others to vindicate us from their Oppression. Indeed if we put our Trust in him, he will not disappoint that Trust, but will support us in our Integrity; and though we may for a Time, by the Power of avowed Enemies, and the Treachery of professed Friends, be so much depressed and cast down, that they may both believe our Condition to be remediless, and that we shall never be able again to hold up our Heads, he will in his good Time raise us, and give us an Opportunity, without a Disposition to return all their ill Offices to them, and make our Joy the greater, by our having no mind to pay that Debt to them in the same Coin we received.

GOOD God, thou hast reduced us from a Condition in which we were helpful unto others, to great Wants and Necessities; so that we are rather the Objects of other Mens Charity, than able to extend Relief to those who are in Distress: Yet, we most humbly beseech thee, give us Hearts to distribute out of that little thou hast left, or sent to us, such Alms as we are able, to those who for the present have more need than we; and let us not, for fear that we shall not be shortly able to support our selves, forbear to relieve others whilst we are able. Incline the Hearts of others to relieve

us, out of the Conscience of their Duty to thee, and because we suffer for performing our Duty to thee; and bless and reward those Inclinations, and let them see they are doing that which is acceptable in thy Sight. Pardon and forgive us all our Sins, preserve our good Names from the Aspersions and Slanders, and our Lives from the Malice and Machinations of our unjust and cruel Enemies: Let not their Devices, and the Concurrence of false and treacherous Friends, be able to destroy us, or to weaken our Confidence in thee, but support us in the right way in which thou hast given us Grace to walk; and if it be not thy Good-will to put an end to our Sufferings here, let us be rewarded with the perpetual seeing thy Face, and enjoying thy Presence hereafter. Amen.

P S A L M XLII.

THE Lord hath cast off his Altar, he hath abhorred his Sanctuary, he hath given up into the hand of the enemy the walls of her Palaces; they have made a noise in the house of the Lord, as in the day of a solemn Feast*, says the Prophet Jeremy, in the heighth of his Lamentations, when he would sum up the insupportable Misery God's People were fallen into. Whilst we may have Resort to God for Pardon and Deliverance, in the Way and Form he hath prescribed, and in those Places where he hath promised to be most present and best inclined to hear us; where besides the Simplicity and Integrity of our own Devotion, we may have the concurrent Charity, and Mediation and Intercession of the joint Prayers of our faithful and honest Friends and Neighbours in a pious and religious Congregation, our Calamities, of how sharp a Nature soever, may be with the more Ease born; and we may hope that we have yet an Antidote left us, strong enough to expel any Poison of our Enemies Malice, Power or Success; and that we shall be for the present able to bear what their Pride and Fury can be able to lay on us; and in the end, by God's Favour, be freed from their Oppression and Tyranny. But when the Lord casts off his Altar, and abhors his own Sanctuary; when he suffers wicked Men to prevail so far, as to condemn his Worship, and despise his Church, as if he had no Care of it: When he suffers the Place of his own immediate Habitation to be profaned, and prostituted to indecent and licentious Uses: When we are inhibited the Exercise of our Religion, and not suffered to pour out our Prayers for Relief in those Churches where he hath used to accept our Sacrifice, and where he hath commanded us to offer it up to him; we have too much Reason to believe, that his Anger is kindled very hot against us, and that he is content to bear that Dishonour done to himself, to make our Calamities the more compleat and hopeless, and it may be, to try, whether in the Enumeration of our particular Losses and Sufferings, we make any Accompt of that Loss, which most immediately expresses our Affection to him, and Value of his Service.

It is very true, we may serve God in any Restraint, in any Prison, or any Desert; nor does he so much confine himself to Temples made with Hands, as to reject the Service that is offered to him in other Places;

* Lam. ii. 7.

Places; and if all the Churches in the World were pulled down, or possessed by *Turks* or *Pagans*, we could not be excused for the Abatement of one Minute of our Devotion; whilst our Hearts are pure and entire to him, we cannot want a Temple to serve him in, that is, so want a Temple, as not to be able to serve him: And yet the not having the Liberty to resort to those publick Places of his Worship, and the Restraint from doing it at those Hours we desire, and in that Manner we desire, is and ought to be accounted the greatest Affliction can be imposed upon us. It may be, in the closest Imprisonment, and the sharpest Necessities our Enemies have been able to reduce us to, we have found enough to sustain Nature, and possibly as much as Nature soberly requires; and yet we lament, and very reasonably complain, that our Estates are taken from us; whereby we are not able to live so well as we desire, nor to do as much good to others as we are willing to do. It may be in our Banishment we have enjoyed a better Air than that of our own Country, and found many Pleasures and Advantages our own Country would not have yielded; and yet we worthily esteem Banishment a sore and heavy Judgment, and believe our selves incapable of any Happiness, without being restored to our Country again: And if we can find Argument for Complaint and Impatience in either of these Cases, how much more ought we to be perplexed and afflicted, that the Liberty of serving God as we ought to do, is taken from us; that we are banished from his House; and more, that his House it self is in the mean time made a Den of Thieves. Indeed, till we have a greater Sense of his Service, and of the want of it, and a less Sense of the loss of our Estates, and the want of that Supply; till we are more afflicted for the Impiety, and Profanation, and Sacrilege committed in God's House, than for the Plundering and Ranfacking of our own; for the Scandals and Reproaches offered to him, when they say, * *Every one that doth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; or where is the God of judgment?* than for any Aspersions or Defamation they can lay on our selves; till the Remembrance of the Blessings we have heretofore enjoyed, when we went with the Multitude of godly and pious Persons to serve God in his holy House, begets such a Sadness in our Souls, that we have no other Sense of Sorrow but for that Deprivation, and no other longing or impatience, to be compared to our Desire of being again restored to that Felicity, and that his Church be restored to its due Reverence and Veneration; it is no wonder that our Spirits fail us, and that we are apter to languish in Despair than to be supported with Hope, and that we are more cast down and confounded with the Succession of Misfortunes which every Day follow us, to find Imprisonment to follow former Oppression, and Banishment that Imprisonment, whilst our Enemies are every Day exalted, and confirmed with new Victories and Successes; than refreshed with the Memory of former Deliverances, both by Sea and Land. Nothing can revive us out of this Trance of Despair, but the Consideration that God himself vouchsafes to be a joint Sufferer with us, to let his own Sanctuary be profaned and neglected, and his own Honour traduced by them who oppress us, which we are sure he will in the end punish and redress; and if we are concerned for him as much as for our selves, our Reparation will be bound up in the same Volume.

By this Reverence and Affection to his Worship and to his Church, we bring our selves by degrees to that true and entire Love of God himself, which so many pretend, and so few attain to; to that high Value and contracted Estimation of him and of his Presence, that we really contemn and despise all the Pleasure and Profit of this World, and the World it self, for interposing and obstructing our immediate Resort to his heavenly Mansion. This unnatural and most divine Appetite, refined from all the vain Delights our human Senses inclines us to, and which refines those very Senses from the dull Pleasure of those gross Objects, and directs them only to what is Spiritual, proceeds from himself, and is the Gift of his Spirit, and therefore is like to be given to those whom he is best acquainted with, whom he hath seen most addicted and best affected to his daily Service in his Church. Earthly Princes, who are his Deputies, do not use to prefer Strangers, or Men whom they know not; but upon Experience of their Affection and Fidelity, draw them nearer, and reward their long and continued Services with some Place about their own Persons, and in their own Palaces. The Almighty Sovereign of all Princes, vouchsafes ordinarily to keep the same Method; not to call those who have walked in the ways of their own sensual Pleasures, or in a perfunctory Observation of his Service at such Times, and in such a Manner, as their own more loved Affairs will permit, to a hearty and singular Knowledge of himself; but chuses those who have first loved his Sanctuary, and been constantly devoted to that; and rewards that long Exercise of their Devotion with such a Manifestation of himself, and of the Glory of Heaven, and the Joys thereof, that our whole Souls are so engrossed therewith, that they have no more Relish of those fantastick Apparitions of Pleasure in the Beauty, and Honour, and Plenty, and all the other Vanity of this World; and transported with that heavenly Extasy, easily controul all the melancholy Suggestions from the loss of Friends, loss of Country, and all other outward Calamities, and acquiesce with the Confidence and Assurance that they shall in the end enjoy his Presence, which will not then only recompence for all former Bitterness, but for the present expel all the ill Taste of what they find necessary for them to undergo.

*G*racious God, in the midst of all those Miseries and Calamities, which by thy Permission our merciless Enemies have brought upon us, give us Grace to feel the being banished from serving thee as we ought to do, and the Sacrilege, Indignity and Profaneness which is used to thy Church, more than all the private Sufferings in our Persons, and in our Fortunes, we can endure; and make us to long more to be restored to the free Exercise of our Religion, and to see the House of thy Worship repaired and purged from that Irreverence it hath endured, than to have our Estates and Offices restored to us. Root out of the Hearts of all Men that Atheism of believing that thou art well-pleased with the Ill thou permittest to be done, or of suspecting or undervaluing thy Power or thy Love, because good Men are oppressed whilst they call and rely upon thee. Suffer us not to despair of thy Mercy because it comes not soon, or is not so soon visible to us, in the way we implore it, but infuse such inward Comforts to our languishing Souls, that they may not be disquieted; but being sure that thou wilt help us in the End, be as
much

much comforted with that Confidence, as if thou hadst already accomplished our Desires. Amen.

P S A L M XLIII.

ENter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified*, says the holy Prophet in another Place: The strictest and the best Life dares not abide that Tryal, hath not Innocence enough to stand it out. Though the uncharitableness and reproaches of *Job's* Friends transported him into some passionate and bold Expressions of his own Innocence and Integrity, yet he no sooner perceived that they took Advantage of those Expressions to charge him with Presumption, as if God had unjustly afflicted him, but he made haste to free himself of that Imputation: † *How should man be just with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.* He that is best prepared for an Account with him, can pay him nothing but his own Coin; and that rather laid up in a Napkin, than husbanded and employed as it ought to have been. If he can offer him a good Thought, an honest Purpose and Intention, he had received them from him, and it may be wanted Courage to improve and execute them; and so the World had no more Fruit of them, than if his Heart had been as wicked as his Neighbours. If he can present to him a Memorial of so many Years Want and Imprisonment, so many Years Disgrace and Banishment, undergone for performing his Duty to his Divine Majesty, and to his Substitute the King; or rather for refusing to do that which according to the Light of his Conscience, and his Reason, was wicked, and sinful to be done; God had given that Grace to him; and though he had not absolutely rejected or resisted it, yet he had often clouded it with Fumes of Melancholy and Discontent, often murmured at his Condition, and wished it were again in his Power to avoid it; at least, had many Fits of Fear, and Apprehension of God's Providence to carry him through: So that when he hath said the best he can for himself, there will be no abiding the Judgment that must still be decreed; Mercy must be implored, no Satisfaction or Payment pretended, but an entire Release and Pardon begged, and relied upon.

There is no Question in any Account between God and us; in any Plea to a Charge of his, we must except against his Judgment, and it is our only Comfort that he hath given us Leave so to do, that we may appeal from it to another Judicatory of his, where his Mercy is Supreme and Sovereign; but it is our Comfort too, that in the Controversies between us and other Men, between us and Men who are too powerful for us, and who use their Power to our Oppression, we may appeal to his Judgment, that when a Combination of ill and unjust Men have obstructed and perverted the Course of Justice in those Tribunals from whence it ought to be administered to us, we may appeal to God himself for his Judgment against those wrong Doers: And since it is evident to him that we are injuriously proceeded against, that he will not leave us to their Power, who only exercise their Malice against us; nor suffer us to be broken with their Oppression, who condemn him, as well as persecute us; and in this Case we may expect that he will not only

* Psal. cxliii. 2.

† Job ix. 23.

only be our Judge, and relieve us from the Ruin is designed for us, but our Advocate, by making our Innocence appear so clearly; that the Hearts of other Men, who were corrupted by the Artifice and Cunning of our Enemies to believe we were justly pursued, shall be converted, and discern our Integrity: Yet in all this Sollicitation for our Deliverance, our chief Desire must still be, that he will improve our Simplicity and Innocence towards himself, and vouchsafe, whatever Hardness we are condemned to undergo in this World, to make us Partakers of those unspeakable Joys which are reserved for the Portion of those who shall be admitted to his Presence in the next.

Almighty Father, thou knowest with what Malice and Tyranny we are persecuted by those who have shaken off all true Devotion towards thee, and all Reverence towards thy anointed Servant, their own natural Sovereign; thou knowest the unjust Calumnies they have from time to time raised against us, and the unjust Judgments they have thereunto passed against us: Judge us thy self, we beseech thee, against these Men, and relieve us against their cruel Oppression; expose us not to their utmost Rage and Fury, because by our Sufferings they presume wickedly to judge thee, and to censure thy Power and thy Justice. Especially infuse the Love of thee and of thy saving Truth into our Hearts, and a delight in being always busied in thy Service; that so being ravished with that full Joy of considering thee, and thy heavenly Kingdom, we may not feel the weak and fruitless Attempts that are made upon us in our Way and Passage to that thy Tabernacle. Amen.

P S A L M XLIV.

O H my Lord! If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his Miracles which our Fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us from Egypt? But now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites; was the Argumentation of Gideon against the Angel, who would persuade him that God still retained some Care, and some gracious Purpose towards his People. He was not startled at all to find God's Servants under great Afflictions, that was now no new Thing; he knew there were as clear Records of their Calamities, as of their Deliverances; and that together they made up one History, which had been derived to them from Father to Son; but that their Sufferings should amount even to a Desolation, that their Enemies should be able to drive them out of their Country, that their Courage should so fail them, that they should be even willing to be Slaves to those who oppressed them, was so new, so without President, that he believed less than an entire Desertion and Dereliction of Providence could not produce it: And after such Desertion, less than Two or Three Miracles, and of his own chusing too, could not raise a Confidence in him great enough to believe that God would again be mindful of him. God is well enough pleased that we argue with him upon his own Presidents; challenge him by what he hath heretofore done, to act over his Mercies again. If we have lived so negligently and licentiously, so absolutely without any Thought of him,

him, that we have not at all invited him to think of us, it will be some degree of Piety to remember what he hath done for our Fathers before our Time; that Memory will work good Effects, and put us in mind what they did, and what we our selves have not done, as well as the Wonders that were wrought by his Divine Majesty; we want little more than very good Memories to make us very good Men. There have been some Men of Opinion, (without taking Christian Principles into the Consideration) that the Reason why so many Inconveniencies and Mischiefs daily fall out in States and Kingdoms, to the endangering thereof, by Rebellions within from the Discontent and Ambition of Subjects, and the like, and by Invasions or other Injuries without, from the Power and Ill-will of Neighbour Princes, proceeds from the Governors and King's Ignorance and Unskilfulness in History, and not observing the Growth and Progress of the same Mischiefs in former Times; which if they had done, it would not be difficult to have provided proper Remedies for all those Diseases. Without examining how much of Truth or Reason may be in this Fancy, with reference to the Politick State, we may justly enough extend the Conclusion very far, with reference to the Spiritual State. If we did diligently and soberly recollect and revolve what God hath heretofore done for us, and for those who have been before us, how long he forbore to send his Punishments and his Scourges, and the Method and Order he observed when he could forbear no longer; the Patience and the Humility he gave to those whom he meant at last to deliver, and the Pride and Obstinacy of those whom he totally destroyed; we might not only easily and reasonably know how to demean our selves in our Afflictions and Calamities, and so make them less terrible to us, since we neglected to use the first Providence, which would have kept us innocent, and so unhurt, but piously (though not infallibly) conclude, what God himself intends to do in our Vindication and Deliverance.

We shall easily conclude, that God is the same now he was then, that he hath the same Power and the same Purposes, is as able and as willing as ever, for we shall as soon suspect his Being as his Constancy; and therefore, that he can command as many Deliverances for us as ever he did for any; and that by his Assistance, we could as easily now repel and destroy our Enemies, as ever *Joshua*, or *Gideon*, or *David* did. It remains then only to prove, that as he is the same God, so we are the same People, and then our Work is done; we may approach him with the President, that we have the same hearty Penitence for what we have done amiss which they felt, and the same humble Submission and Patience for what he hath done to us, as they had whom he hath delivered out of the like Miseries as we labour under: We may in such a Case, be bold to put him in Mind of what he hath done, and desire him to do it again: But it will not be enough to be parallel only in the Sufferings, to undergo the same Calamities which they have undergone: That our Spirit and our Courage fails us, and that we are given up as a Prey to our Enemies, that our Estates and Fortunes are taken by those who hate us, and that we are made a matter of Scorn and Mirth to those who oppress us: That we are banished our Country, and exposed as a Reproach and Derision to Strangers, and put to beg our Bread in a strange Land; except our Courage and our Constancy make up the other Part of the Parallel too, except we are so fortified in our Uprightness and Integrity, that all those Sufferings cannot shake us, but that we

continue as steady in our Duty and Devotion to him, and thereupon as confident of his Favour and Protection, as if we were in the most pleasant Condition. No Difficulties or Streights must make us decline the right way, and hope to find a nearer by our own Invention; it is not being in Adversity, but behaving our selves well under it, that will hasten our Deliverance. If the Dangers our Enemies threaten us with, or the Violence they actually use towards us, does prevail with us to decline a Tittle from our Duty, and to comply with their Wickedness, or with them, whilst they are guilty, thereby to lessen their Outrage and Malice against us, we do no better than stretch out our Hands to a strange God, and shall not God search this out?

If any Necessity that Nature can be subjected to, could excuse a Man from swerving in the least Degree from a Divine Precept, * *Esaú's* selling his Birthright would be rather imputed to the Harshness and Ill-nature and Extortion of his Brother, than either to his own Gluttony or Prodigality. He was faint with Hunger, and besought his Brother to relieve him with the Food he had before him; who refused to perform that brotherly Office, except he would purchase it at the Price of his Birthright: What should he do? Whether this Birthright was a double Portion of the Estate, or his Father's Blessing, or the Priesthood itself, he was at the Point to die, and what Profit should this Birthright do to him? In this Exigent, and upon this Necessity he made that Bargain; yet, says the Text, *Thus Esaú despised his Birthright*. If he had set the Value he ought to have done upon it, he would not have parted with it under any Appearance of Necessity. If the Preservation of our Fortunes and Estates, or of our Life itself, prevails with us to do that which our Conscience tells us we ought not to do, we do no better than despise a good Conscience; there can be no Excuse for swerving from it. The pious and consciencious Man, for professing and avowing what his Duty obliges him to, is killed all the Day long, never free from Reproaches and Persecution; and rather than part with the Innocence and Simplicity of the Sheep, will submit to his Fate too, and be led like him to the Slaughter. A Steadiness and Constancy in Suffering, is the most powerful Oratory to God Almighty to ease us of our Sufferings, and to shew his Power and his Mercy in our Redemption.

GRacious God, who hast in all Ages extended thy Mercy and Loving-kindness towards those thy Servants who have undergone great Calamities and Afflictions out of the Conscience of their Duty to thee; thou knowest our Sufferings, and the great Weight of Misery that presses us down: Thou art the same Father, and canst as easily relieve us, as thou hast relieved them; and as easily make us superior to our Enemies, as thou hast hitherto given them Power to oppress us. Thou seest the Reproach and Derision we are fallen to, and how few there are who take Compassion of us: Let not all this make us in the least Degree forget our Duty to thee, or make us devise ways how to elude our Obligations: Keep our Hearts steady and entire to thy Truth, and give us Courage to despise all Dangers that shall threaten us; and rather to lay down our Lives, than any unworthy Submission or Compliance to dishonour the Cause which we suffer: And then accept our Sufferings, and pardon

* Gen. xxv. 31, 32.

Sins which have brought them on us; and out of thy Goodness put an End to our Calamities, and manifest thy Favour to us in a speedy Deliverance, for the Merits of thy own dear Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

P S A L M XLV.

IT is no wonder that Christ's Kingdom upon Earth prospers no better, that the Propagation of Christian Religion is no more advanced, but that Paganism and Infidelity rather gets than loses Ground in the World; when the Beauty of Christian Doctrine, which used to allure the Hearts of Men, and which no Barbarity could resist, is not presented to their View in its true Lustre, but under Clouds and Dresses of Severity and Obscurity, and Christ himself render'd more terrible, and using other kind of Weapons than were worn by him; and they who pretend to do his Work, are armed in another Fashion, and use those Arms in another manner than he did, or directed others to do for him: When he that is all Mercy and Peace, is made the Argument for the most bloody, cruel, and unnatural Wars, and uncharitable Contentions, that the Malice and Ambition of the Hearts of Men can be engaged in; and those Things pretended to be done for his Sake, which he abhors as much as Hell it self, where they were contrived. It hath been in all times the great Argument for Christianity, and the Truth of the Gospel, that it hath wrought it self into the Hearts of so great a part of the World by its own Purity, and the Divine Force and Power of Truth, without any of those Artifices and Stratagems, and without any of that Force and Violence which usually imposes upon the Affections and Minds of Men, and against all the Oppression and Persecution, which the Malice of the Devil and his Instruments could raise against it. That the Doctrine of one Man, new and unheard of, contrary and destructive to all that Pleasure and Happiness which the Affections and Appetites of Men had raised to themselves, after so much Scorn and Indignity cast upon the Author of it, compleated with the most ignominious Death the worst Malefactor could be put to, committed to the Care of less than a Hundred poor simple Men to be published to the World; a Doctrine, that instead of preparing Honours and Preferments for those who should be addicted to it, taught them only to submit patiently to all Dishonours and Oppressions, Cold, Hunger, Imprisonment; to be willing to be despised by the Proud, to be oppressed by the Covetous, and to be put to Death by the Cruel, and all this without any Time assigned for the Reward, or Place for the receiving it, but such a Time as the World thought impossible ever to come, and such a Place as they believed had no Being: That this Doctrine should by such a Handful of contemptible Instruments, spread it self over the Universe, and get so much Credit in the Hearts of Men, as that Millions should quietly lay down their Lives for the Maintenance of it; and chuse rather quietly to lose their Lives, than either to rebel, or to do any other unlawful Thing for the Defence of them: That all the Power of the Kings and Princes of the Earth, solemnly combined against this Truth, should not be able to suppress it; and that nothing should be applied to quench and extinguish their Rage and Fury, but the Tears

I

and

and Blood of those who died for it; and that in the End, the Veneration of their admirable Virtue and Meekness, should convert the Hearts of their Enemies to the same Faith; is such an Evidence of its Sanctity, as can be applied to no other Profession that is or ever was under Heaven, but meerly and entirely the Christian; and if the Propagation of that be endeavoured by any other Means, it may very well be suspected not to have the primitive End, when it misses so much of the primitive Way.

The Strength, and Glory, and Majesty of Christ, consisted in his Truth, in his Humility, and in his Justice; from thence proceeded that Beauty that ravished the Beholders, and that Eloquence that convinced all Opposers; those were the Arrows which could not be resisted, but found Entrance into the Hearts of those who at first appeared the greatest Enemies. It is observed, that in the Assault the Devil made upon him with that Insolence and Prophaneness, and Craft and Blasphemy, Christ would not use any Force against him; he might have terrified him at his first Approach in that Manner, that he should not have durst to have made an ill Motion to him, and might as easily have thrown him into the Sea, as he suffered him to carry the Swine; but that was not his way of Conquest; the wrong Party may as well prevail by Force; he vouchsafes therefore to be too hard for him by Reason; if he misapplies Scripture to corrupt him, he convinces him by Scripture of his Malice in perverting the Sense of that Text, and suffers him to continue his Disputation till he knows not else what to say; and though he wants Grace to confess and acknowledge the Truth, he wants Courage and Logick to argue farther against it; he is compelled to leave him, for fear he might be compelled to follow him. Truth it self is so strong, as it needs no outward Force and Violence to carry it on, and is wise enough to elude all the Craft and Subtily that shall be used against it. I know not upon what Christian Grounds many Men presume to conclude, that we are not only to have no Friendship or Familiarity with any Nation or People that are not Christians, but even believe the Difference in Christian Opinions to be a sufficient Warrant for passionate and uncharitable Contentions, and for War it self. There can be no Reason why any Christian Prince may not make a League and Peace with the *Great Turk*, *Mogul*, or the *Tartar*, as well as *David* and *Solomon* did with *Hiram*; the latter of which renewed the same League his Father had made, according (says the Text) to the Wisdom which God had given him*. And no question the Elements of Christian Religion advise and enjoin a Peace with all Men; that is, to refrain and avoid all Acts of Hostility with all the World, that will live peaceably with us, as the best, if not the only way to propagate the true Religion, and all manner of Truth; and it is very strange that they who do believe that the Conscience cannot be compelled by War or Violence, can believe that there are any People in the World with whom we should not preserve Peace; except they think that there are a Sort of Men that God hath so reprobated, that he would by no Means have them reduced from their Error, and instructed in the Knowledge of him, and that those Men are to beget others of the same Infidelity to the end of the World; which Conclusion, how inevitably soever it must follow from such Propositions, no Man is arrived at the Madness and Wickedness to avow. And for the Passion that arises upon the different

different Opinions of his Worship, the Animosity and Uncharitableness that proceeds from thence, can have no Authority from his Precepts or Example; and if we did for his Sake love Justice and Integrity, and practise Patience and Humility as he did, we could not but be of a Religion very acceptable to him: And if we are without those Garments which are of so precious an Odour and Perfume in his Nostrils, we shall merit little by the Opinions we have contracted of him and his Worship.

As we are not apt to consider Christ himself aright, and thereby may probably fail in the prescribing good Rules to our selves for the Performance of our Duty to him, so we have as little Regard what Service we are to do, and what Reverence we are to pay to that dear Spouse of his, the Church: Many too superstitiously contracting all their Devotion to her Ivory Palaces, and to her Rayment of Needlework, to outward Forms and Ceremonies, to the Gaudry and Pomp of the Divine Worship, without much considering the inward Operation and Effect of Religion; and others as licentiously and profanely, under Pretence of being all Glorious within, condemn all outward Preparations for, and Ornament of God's Service; and because Christ's Church consists of the Multitude and Universality of Believers, and that he looks principally upon the Heart as the Seat of Religion, they will allow him no other Temple to be served in, and believe both Churches and Priests of no Use to the Exercise of their Devotion; as if our Saviour, by abolishing some Sacrifices, and some Ceremonies, had made all Things so entirely Lay and Secular, that he had neither reserved a peculiar People for his own immediate Service, nor left his Church so well endowed and adorned, as to be capable of Sacrilege or Impiety. Whereas, though the King's Daughter be to be all Glorious within, her Cloathing is likewise to be of wrought Gold; inward Sanctity appears the more beautiful, for the outward Decency and Lustre that attends it. And as Princes, though their greatest Glory and Strength consists in the Affection and Faithfulness of the Hearts of their Subjects, have yet noble Palaces to reside in for their Greatness and Majesty, and great Officers of their Court and State, for their Splendor and Magnificence; so Christ himself, though he expects and requires the Duty of the Heart, and to be served by all Persons, and in all Places, yet he reserves some Offices in his Service for a peculiar People, more particularly dedicated to it; and vouchsafes more especially to reside in those Places which are more solemnly dedicated to, and consecrated for his Worship: And therefore the only Act our blessed Saviour did, that seemed to have Passion in it, was out of his Indignation at the profaning his House, when he found Buyers and Sellers, and Merchandizing in the Temple: So far he was from consenting that the long established Reverence to that Sacred Place should be in the least Degree lessened or discontinued. And if that Opinion of learned Men be true, that all the Books of Scripture are written by the Spirit of God, yet that in the Histories and Epistles, and those pieces of Scripture of that kind, the Writers of them were left to use their own Words and Expressions, the Holy Ghost being contented with having suggested the Matter and the Method: So in those Psalms in which *David* writ his own History, and of his own Distresses, he was left to use his own Language: But all Matters of Prophecy were so entirely the Dictates of God's Spirit, that as well every Word, as the Matter, was infused into the Authors,

thors, whose Tongues were but the Pens of ready Writers, and did no more but set down the very Words that were dictated to them. So what *David* hath in this, and other Psalms, and the other Prophets in other Places have writ with the Spirit of Prophecy of our Saviour, and his Love to his Church, are God's own very Words and Expressions: And truly the Stile is so very different from what is used elsewhere, and the Affection so warm and exalted, that we have Reason to believe there is somewhat extraordinary in it; and that all that Jealousy for the Honour and Provision, for the Rayment and Attendance of his Spouse, and Care that Reverence be paid to her, is not for a Church that shall be Naked, and without any Ornaments of State or Decency, or without any Train or Attendance that shall look after her particular Service; and that she may be as piously supplied in all Offices by Lay or Mechanick Persons, as by Spiritual and Ecclesiastical: * *An everlasting covenant he made with him, and gave him the priesthood among the people; he beautified him with comely ornaments, and cloathed him with a robe of glory: He put upon him perfect glory, and strengthened him with rich garments, with breeches, with a long robe, and the ephod, &c.* says the Son of *Syrach*, of God's Favour to *Aaron*. Christ hath given us no Cause to think, that he hath not as much Regard of the Priesthood under the Gospel, as his Father had towards that under the Law. The Reverence of the Church, and the liberal Maintenance of the Ministers thereof, the decent and comely Ornaments both for the one and the other, have been in all Times wherein Religion and Piety have found any Estimation, thought an essential Prop and Support of Sanctity and Religion it self.

MOST gracious Saviour and Redeemer of Mankind, whose Beauty allures all to whom thou vouchsafest to appear, and whose Eloquence convinces and converts all who hear thy divine Voice; infuse thy Grace into our Hearts, that we may admire thy Humility, thy Justice, and thy Charity; and think our selves obliged in our Duty to thee, to follow thy Example in the Practice of those Christian Virtues, without the which we cannot be good Christians, let our Opinions be what they will: Make us to believe that living virtuously as we ought to do, and being meek, and patient, and just, are the strongest Arguments we can use, to induce other Men to the Knowledge of thee, and the Love of our Religion; and that in being proud, and impatient, and uncharitable, we do the best we can to drive Men from the Reverence of thy Name, and discredit the Profession of it. Look down with Pity and Compassion upon thy desolate Spouse the Church, miserably oppressed, and even torn to pieces by all kinds of Schism and Faction, and all kinds of Profaneness and Impiety. Men are so far from repairing to it with Gifts and Presents, that they only approach it to rob and deface it, to tear off its Cloathing of Gold, and Rayment of Needle-work, and to seize on her Ministers, and to cast them in Prison with the utmost Reproach and Indignity. Suppress this License, and Profaneness, and Sacrilege, and strike their wicked Hearts with Terror at the Thought of robbing thee: Repair these sinful Breaches that are made; and incline those to be willing to repair who have made them. Restore, good God, this thy Church to its Rights and Splendor; and

remove

* Eccl. xlv. 7, 8.

remove those Clouds of Ignorance and Profaneness, which have of late kept too many from seeing with what Reverence thy Worship ought to be performed; and give us all such Hearts, as may invite thee to deliver us from the Calamities we undergo, and send a Blessing upon us in our own Country again. Amen.

P S A L M XLVI.

IF after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink for to morrow we die*, says St. Paul, in his Argumentation with the Corinthians upon the Resurrection of the Dead. They who are not terrified from the Exercise of their Duty, by the Injuries and Indignities which cruel Men, as savage and barbarous as Beasts, prosecute them with; and they who expose their Bodies to Torments, to be torn by wild Beasts, or to be otherwise martyr'd, rather than consent to do that which their Consciences tell them would be offensive to God Almighty, were not only very miserable, but very contemptible and ridiculous, and deserved all the Misery can befall them, if they were not sure that there is another Life after this, in which the Sufferings of this are considered and abundantly recompenced; where the torn and mangled Body is gathered together, and appears in perfect Beauty as well as with perfect Bliss: If it were otherwise, they who eat and drink, and enjoy the Pleasures of this World, and labour to improve them to the utmost, were the wisest Men upon the Earth, and might justly laugh at the Folly of all the rest. Indeed, they who follow the Precepts and Example of Christ, were in infinite Considerations of all other Men most miserable, if they had not some Advantages and Prerogatives peculiar to themselves, as well as so many Inconveniencies and Disadvantages whereby they are render'd inferior to others: If they were obliged to so universal and entire a Practice of Humility and Patience, against all the Calumnies, and Reproaches, and Combinations that can be raised against their Fortune, their Fame, and their Life; that they must not use any of those Weapons to encounter the other, and upon the Matter, to make themselves miserable, by declining all those Means, which to human Understanding and Reason can only preserve them, and in some Cases to submit and undergo the present Dangers, when it is in their Power to fly from them; I say, this were a very insupportable Condition, if there were not some extraordinary inward Comfort to assist; if the Tenderness of the Conscience served only to entangle and perplex us in Difficulties and Streights, and had not wherewithal to cherish, and comfort, and support us in them; if we must controul and abandon our mere natural Reason, when Dangers and Distresses might be prevented and avoided; and we should have nothing but natural Reason to rely on and to uphold us, when we are in those Distresses, and no hope but from thence to mend or get out of that Condition.

But God relieves such extraordinary Sufferings with extraordinary Succour; and though he does not presently always free those who put their Trust in him, and observe his Commands, from Perils and Dangers, yet he frees them from that Fear and Consternation of Mind,

which

which makes those Dangers felt and terrible: Though the Earth itself be removed, all Foundations of Government dissolved, Obedience to Princes, Reverence to Religion, Brotherly-kindness and Affection, be forgotten, or (which is worse) forbid; though the rude and unbridled People roar like the Sea, and the great Mountains, Kings and Princes shake, and are even overwhelmed with the Swelling of those Waters; the pious and conscientious Man is not carried away with that Torrent: what alteration and change soever there is, he is sure God is constant and will protect those who trust in him as they ought to do. We are all willing to be protected by him, all forward enough to cry God help us, when we least trust in him, think on him least; we are too active and stirring to help him in our Deliverance, by some unworthy Shift or Compliance of our own, as if his Providence were not enough, without our Assistance: Whereas, if we did indeed rely on him as our Strength and our Refuge, when we see no way open through which we can with Discretion and Honesty pass to save our selves, let the Danger be never so great, we should sit still and be quiet, till God himself who will in the End be exalted above all ill Men, please to break the Bows, and cut the Spears, and confound all the Engines of Destruction with which we are environed.

GOOD God, we have no Place to fly unto for Succour but thy Majesty, nor any Strength to defend us but thy Protection; preserve us from the devouring Storms of Treason and Rebellion, and let us never be afraid of performing our Duty to thee, and to thy Vicegerent the King. Infuse into the Hearts of all Christian Kings and all Christian People, a Love of Peace, that Wars may cease unto the Ends of the Earth; and that they may have a true Sorrow of Heart for the precious Blood they have already so wantonly and barbarously spilt, that the Guilt thereof may be washed away by the Blood of thy Son. Amen.

P S A L M XLVII.

A Very little thing will make us rejoice and be very glad, and commonly our Joy is the greater, if the same Matter begets Grief and Tears in other Men: We are so ill-natured as not to feel our Joy, if the Argument administers as much Comfort to other Men as it does to us; and we are never so well contented, as when our Happiness is the Reflex of other Mens Calamities. If those we do not love, it may be for being better Men than our selves, are brought into Adversity and Misery, how unjustly soever, and their Families exposed to Want, Disgrace and Reproach, our Hearts are more delighted than they would be with any publick good Fortune that could befall the Church or the Nation whereof we are a Part; and as few People mourn, and are sorrowful as they ought to be, for any universal Judgment and Affliction which falls upon a whole Kingdom; conceiving foolishly, the Burthen to be so much the lighter, because so many are concerned in the Weight of it; so, that what ought to make the Hearts of every one to bleed, scarcely touches the Heart of any one, and if it does, it is only for the particular Impression it makes upon his own Fortune and Interest, not at

for what relates to the general. So it is likewise in the Matter of our rejoicing; if God sends the Blessing of Peace, and Plenty, and Reputation upon a Kingdom and Nation, that Religion flourishes, and Justice is well administred in it, that their Affection and Alliance is valued and desired by their Neighbours, there are so many Sharers in this transcendent Prosperity, that scarce a particular Man thinks it worth his particular Acknowledgment, or makes God a Thanksgiving, or spends a Prayer for the Continuance of it. We are all Princes in this Business; and as they value their Greatness and Power more by what their Neighbours want, than by what themselves abound in; more by the Distresses other States endure, and the Miseries they are subject to, than by the Peace and Plenty they are possessed of: So we, in the Survey and Computation of our own Felicity, measure our own Delights by the Anguish and Vexation others undergo, and have no gust in that Pleasure which others may tast as well as we. We love our very Sins the better for being singular, and excelling in them; and if other Men have grown to as great a height of Wickedness, are able to do as much Mischief as we, we are sooner converted upon the Envy and Disdain of that Competition, than upon the Conscience of the Ill and Mischief we have done.

These vulgar, cheap Affections and Passions are unworthy the Hearts of Christians, which can never be filled with Pleasures of so narrow an Extent, and which are circumscribed merely by our own particular Concernments and Interests. Good Subjects never rejoice so worthily, as for the Greatness and Power of their Sovereign, when he hath extended his Empire over a new People, and reduced a foreign Nation to his Obedience: The Joy of Christians ought to be most exalted in the Greatness, and Power, and Magnificence of the Prince they serve; and when he vouchsafes to enlarge his Jurisdiction, by converting a People to God's Service, who have not known his Name, it ought to administer the highest Comfort and Delight to us that our Souls are capable of, next, or even with that of our own Redemption; and if it were possible for the Joys of Heaven to be lessened, or to receive any allay, it would be from the Agony that pious Hearts may suffer, out of the Sense that so many Souls shall be shut out from thence: So much we ought to be affected with the Communication of the Good we receive, and to wish all Mankind Sharers with us in that inestimable Treasure.

Merciful Father, whose Power and Greatness is such, that thou canst be obeyed by all whom thou wilt vouchsafe to make obedient to thee: We give thee humble Thanks, for making choice of us before many Nations of the World, to impart the Knowledge of thy Glory and thy Majesty to, in which our greatest Joy and Comfort consists. Enlarge, we beseech thee, thy Favour to us; and increase our Joy, by reducing all Turks and Infidels, and such as have no knowledge of thee, to a due Submission to, and Reverence of thy great Name; and give us Grace, with the same Piety and Devotion, to pray for and endeavour their Conversion; and when they are converted, to join in a universal Sacrifice of Joy and Thanksgiving for the same, as for our own Salvation; that all the World may be gathered together under thy Shield, to praise thy great Name to the World's End. Amen.

P S A L M XLVIII.

AND *it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it **, says the Prophet *Isaiah*, when he would describe the Church of Christ. No Mountain shall be so perspicuous and visible, for all Nations of the Earth shall plainly discern it; and no Mountain is so fixt and unmoveable, for that may be shaken and even dissolved, but this stands so fast, that the Gates of Hell itself shall never be able to prevail against it, so far as to destroy it, to annihilate it. If we dealt with Christ as we do one with another, as we ought to have great Affection and Tenderneſs to his Church for his ſake, and becauſe he is the Husband and the Head of it, and takes any thing that is well or ill done to it as done to himſelf, ſo we would bear a great Reverence and Eſtimation towards his divine Maſteſty, for his Churches Sake, for the Greatneſs, and Glory, and Splendor of that wonderful Structure and Fabrick. If we find a private, obſcure Perſon, without the Advantage of Favour and Protection of great Men, by his own Induſtry and Dexterity get himſelf into a general Eſtimation and Credit, erect noble Palaces, and draw great Dependance to him, and all this without doing the leaſt unlawful Action with reference to the publick Peace, or the leaſt Grievance or Wrong with reference to private Intereſt; but on the contrary, by being juſt, and humble, and liberal, and charitable to all Men; we are ready to magnify this Man, to admire his Virtue and Magnanimity, and to pronounce thoſe who can be Enemies to ſuch a one, to be Enemies to Mankind. Never Man came more privately and obſcurely into the World, found leſs Benefit or Advantage by the Protection of Princes or great Men, than our bleſſed Saviour did, was more reproached and deſpiſed than he; and that he ſhould be able to erect ſuch a Building, his Church, of ſo great Luſtre, as to be diſcerned farther than the higheſt Mountain, and of ſo vaſt an Extent, that it ſhould reach into all Parts of the World; that he ſhould draw Dependants to him of all Nations, and all Languages, and that thoſe Nations and Languages which know nothing of each other, nor can communicate each to other what they do know, ſhould have the ſame Thoughts and Opinions of his divine Maſteſty, and pay the ſame Reverence to him; that no Combinations amongſt Kings and Princes againſt this Church, ſhould be able to undermine it, nor their Power, Wealth and Ambition to overthrow it; that notwithstanding the Heighth of its Situation, no Storms or Tempeſts from the North ſhould impair its Beauty, or diminifh its Fruit: It is a Matter of ſo ſtrange, and ſo prodigious a Nature, as cannot but produce in us a wonderful Eſtimation and Reverence towards the Architect. And being our ſelves, by his Mercy, become of his Retinue and Dependance, we have reaſon to be confident, that he hath not wrought all theſe Miracles and Wonders for it, to ſuffer it at laſt to be deſtroyed by any Power or Faction of this World: Yet, that his extraordinary Care and Protection of it muſt not beget a Negligence in us, as if our watching for the Guard of it were leſs neceſſary. Though next the Vi-

gillance

* *Iſaiah* ii. 2.

giance of her General, her chief Strength depends in her Palaces, in the constant serving God with Reverence and Decency in those Churches which are consecrated and dedicated to his Service; though her Towers, Princes and Prelates, and learned Men, are the prime Guard to her, yet we have in our several Stations all a Charge of her Safety; and any Corruption or Wickedness in our Lives is a Blemish to her, and we do thereby our best to make a Breach, and open a Passage for the Enemy to destroy her.

Merciful Father, who hast so miraculously founded and established thy Church upon a Rock, against all the Devices and Machinations of the Devil, and of devilish Men: Let thy Care and Purpose towards it be so clear and manifest to the World, that ill Men may not entertain any hope to do it hurt, nor good Men may not fear the insupportable Distress of it. As thou hast in its Infancy protected it against the Pride and Fury of Kings and Princes, and the great Men of the Earth, and struck a sudden Fear and Terror into their Hearts, when they contrived Mischief against it; so we beseech thee now to defend it against the Impiety and Profaneness of the Rabble, and the meanest of the People; and let not their License endanger it, or bring dishonour to thy Name, but let the Generations to come praise thee for its present Deliverance. Amen.

P S A L M XLIX.

THERE was never yet a Man so ignorant, though he had no Information of the Majesty and Glory of the Creator, and the Joys of Heaven, nor ever Atheist so mad, though being sufficiently informed of both he hath neglected and despised the one and the other, as to believe that this Life being determined, he could carry the Wealth he had gathered and kept together along with him whithersoever he should go, (for most Men have fancied some Place to resort to after their going hence, albeit they knew not what it should be,) or that he should be in the better Condition, or the more regarded in the next World, for the Plenty and Power he had enjoyed in this. Men's Experience enough tells them, that those Advantages of Fortune, when they are so much in their Possession that they can dispose them as they please, to Rewards or Purchases, are not able to prolong their Lives here one Minute, or to procure Health, or Strength, or Appetite for them whilst they do live; nay, not to supply them with Ease and Repose, or with quiet and chearful Thoughts, during the Time that they do enjoy them. Infirmities, and Vexations, and Sickneses they may gain by them, which poor and distressed Men are without, because they cannot go to the Charge of them; their Lives may be rendered the more unpleasant by their Pride and Emulations, and the shorter by their Surfeits and Excesses; and their Deaths the more perplexed and terrible, when they find that the Iniquities of their Heels have compassed them about, that their loved and bosom Sins have continued with them, and been entertained and hugged by them, till that extreme Minute of their Lives; but they shall be so far from receiving Comfort from the Riches and the Abundance they have hoarded up, that their Consciences shall suggest

suggest to them, that they have had too much Joy, and too great a Portion in this, to expect any in the next World; and so their Despair shall antedate their Misery, by making them feel that Torment before they leave this Life, which may be improved and lengthened to Eternity after their Death. Since then this is not only really the Truth but so obvious to all Understandings, it will be worth a sad Consideration, and serious revolving, what it is that so bewitches our Affections and captivates our Judgments; that we are so transported with the Pursuit of worldly Prosperity, and so delighted and intoxicated with the Possession of it, as if the Salvation of our precious Souls might be procured by the Credit of it. That notwithstanding all our Experience of the Vanity, Giddiness, and Inconstancy of the Glory of this World, and of the Trouble and Anxiety of it, whilst it does last, though we see those who have stood highest in Estimation and Repute, and seemed to have best provided for the Propagation of their Memories, and that their Families might continue from Generation to Generation, on a sudden cast down to the Depth of Obloquy and Contempt, and led like Sheep to the Slaughter, at the Discretion of those, whom a little before they had not thought worthy to eat at their Table; yet our Affections are as violent, and our Appetites as importunate to invest our selves in those glorious Trappings; and that Father, who miserably perished yesterday by his Ambition and Covetousness, leaves a Son behind him, as much enamoured on all those Delusions, as if never Man had miscarried in the Pursuit, and Life it self were not to be valued without them.

This contagious Disease, which like an eating Leprosy, almost spreads it self through the Nature of Man, and incorporates with it, proceeds not from an overvaluing this World, which we are apt enough in all our Distempers to despise too much, when we are ready to throw away our part of Hopes of it in any Fit of our Passion and Revenge, but an undervaluing the next; we think too much of the one, and not at all of the other; some slight cursory Discourses we may sometimes hold of it, but we give no Ear, no serious and intentionary hearkening to it, it never comes to be a Meditation of the Heart: Indeed we do not at all consider, it is well if we do believe that we have Souls; at least, that those Souls are to outlive their Bodies, and to be well or ill provided for, to be happy or miserable, as they have been humble or proud Souls, temperate and devout, or licentious or irreligious Souls, during that time that they were entrusted with their Bodies. We make not the right Use of the promiscuous Death of the Rich and the Poor, of the Prince and the Beggar, that they are all equally committed to the Earth and the Worms, without any Precedence or Preeminence in the Grave; but because we see that wise Men die, and likewise the Fool, we are willing to believe that they fare alike also after Death, and so chuse that which may most satisfy our loose Affections and Appetites in this Life, take great Pains, and use much Art to nourish and cherish those Sins, which the Weakness and nauseating of our Nature would willingly quit and part from; that our Age may be compassed about with the same sinful Desires and Pleasures that our Youth took Delight in. We do not at all consider, that they who preserve their Innocence and their Conscience entire, though they may be oppressed and exposed to several Wants and sharp Distresses during the short Night of this Life, shall yet in the bright and pleasant Morning of the Resurrection, be invested in so large a Do-

Dominion, that they shall be Judges of those very Men, who in their Triumph in this World they have seen with so great Pride and Tyranny condemn and prosecute those who were poor and in Misery. Indeed it is our not thoroughly believing the Resurrection, that makes us and keeps us so enamour'd on the present Vanities, and on what must support those Vanities. We have Patience enough to wait for any Benefit and Advantage which we are sure will come to us at last, or but conclude may very probably befall us; and upon that reasonable Confidence, have Courage to bear many Difficulties unagreeable enough with our Nature: We bear the tedious and painful Application of Physick and Medicines, to prolong our uneasy Life, and interrupted Health; nay, there are very few that would not frankly submit their Bodies to a Year's Imprisonment, and Restraint, and Penury, and their Minds to a servile Application and Flattery of any unworthy, dishonest Person, (which is much the greater Pain) if they might be sure, at the Expiration of that Term, to enjoy Twenty Years more in a great Office or Place of Command and Profit, with what Labour and Perplexities sooner incur'd: And therefore, our being so soon dismayed and broken with Adversity, Affliction, and worldly Crosses, which cannot last long; and our setting so great a Price upon Riches, and those Appurtenances which are thereby obtained, can proceed from or consist with nothing else, but an utter Disbelief of that new Estate in the Resurrection, and of the Eternity of it in all imaginable Joy and Glory.

It is not then, that there is no Remedy for this miserable Disease, but that we will not apply the Remedy, which keeps us labouring in this vile sickness. Let us therefore seriously lay to Heart, that our Time in this World is but a short Eve to an everlasting Holiday; and that the World itself is but a barren, steep and stormy Passage, to the most fertile and pleasant Land that ever was inhabited; where, if we have behaved our selves well in the Way, more glorious Mansions are prepared for us, than the greatest Monarch of the Earth was ever in Possession of: Let us in our daily Morning Prayers, humbly and earnestly beseech God to root out of our Hearts all those immoderate Desires and Inclinations towards the Pomp and Pleasures of this Life which intoxicate us, and we shall be ashamed all the Day after, to entertain any of those proud, and covetous, and ambitious Thoughts, that are so contrary to our Prayers; and so by devoutly wishing to be as we ought to be, we shall grow fixt, and steady, and superior to those vain Temptations.

GRACIOUS God, infuse into our Hearts by thy especial Grace, such a true Love of thee, and such a high Value of that Inheritance thou hast prepared for us in the next World, that we may look on this, and the Riches and Plenty of it, with no other Appetite, than as they may, by being virtuously and charitably disposed by us, advance our Journey towards thee: Make us seriously consider, that the putting any Trust in those transitory Delights, will bring great Prejudice to our Souls, which cost thy beloved Son so dear: And let us not take to Heart how miserable we live, or with what Reproaches we are compelled to suffer Death; so we may give our Consciences Assurance, by having to our utmost Abilities performed our Duty, and submitted to thy Pleasure, that we shall obtain a happy and a joyful Resurrection. Amen.

P S A L M L.

HATH the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams*, said Samuel to Saul when he would have excused the having preserved the best of the Spoil of the *Amalekites*, upon pretence that he meant to sacrifice them to God, who had given him express Command to destroy them. There can be no excuse for swerving from the precise Rule which God hath prescribed to us; nor must we compound a Religion out of the good Purposes and good Intentions of Piety and Devotion, for our Benefit and Convenience, whilst for the present we decline a fundamental Point of our Religion, Obedience to what he hath enjoined. If in any Exigency of Necessity or Danger for the Preservation of our Fortunes, that we may preserve our Families, or for the saving of our Lives from the Fury of cruel and bloody Tyrants, who unjustly and unwarrantably persecute us, we shall condescend to do that which is literally against our Duty, and the Law given to us by God to walk by, and shall think ourselves excusable; we must expect the old Question, † *What meaneth then this bleating of the Sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the Oxen which I hear?* Nor will it be a better Answer, That we have ransomed our Lives and Estates, with good Resolutions to employ both in his Service; that we hope to be useful to our Country, our King, Christ's Church, and that we resolve charitably to assist others with our Fortune who are in danger of starving: We are not Judges what is to be preserved, nor which is the Way of preserving. It may be, God think it fit that our Estates, our Liberties and our Lives, should be sacrificed to his Truth, and for the Defence of it; and then, the redeeming either by our Artifices and Compliances, is no less than Sacrilege, and defrauding him of his Due, and presuming to think our selves wiser than his All-seeing Providence. What he hath determined shall be destroyed, or utterly lost to us, must not be kept for Sacrifices; and what he hath appointed for Sacrifice to him, must not be preserved for our selves. What Inconveniences may probably flow from our punctual and severe Prosecution of our Duty, and resolute Observation of the Dictates of our Conscience; or what Advantage and Benefit may ensue and result to God's Service, from our seasonable Dissimulation, and temporary receding from that which is abstractly just, are Considerations of too sublime a Nature for our Cognizance: It is well for us that we are not trusted with a Latitude for those Decisions, and that we are peremptorily enjoined (as the Sum of which we must give an Account at the last and terrible Day, and for omission whereof only we shall be then judged) to order our Conversation aright; that is, to live innocently, and to preserve the Peace of a good Conscience for God's Sake, and to praise his Name for any thing he puts us to suffer in a good Cause; and not to suspect his Favour to us, till we find our selves weary of suffering, and ready to relinquish the Cause, that we may suffer no longer.

Learned Men put a great Difference between praising and thanking God, and offering the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving to him: No

* 1 Sam. xv. 22.

† Jer. 14.

Men pray oftner, and seem to praise him more, than they who obey him least, and indeed rely least on him; but none offer the Sacrifice of Praise to him, but they whose devout Hearts are warmed with Charity, and with such a fervent Love to him, that they consider nothing else; so that the simple praying to, or praising of him, is very far from a Reward. * *When you spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers I will not hear; your hands are full of blood,* says the Spirit of God by the Prophet *Isaiah*. He cares not for the Office of the Lips, when the Hands and the Heart are impure. We have reason to believe that there are many Men who have lived very wickedly, and yet have not more to answer for any Sin, than for their frequent Prayers to, and praising of God; who abhors nothing more than that they who neglect his Precepts, refuse to do that which he hath enjoined, should approach him with a perfunctory formal Devotion: The loose, dissolute, and licentious Persons, who do not pretend to know him, or to stand in need of him, but to follow the Dictates of their own Affections and Appetites, maintain an open War with him, and can draw none to their Party, but those who are prepared to defy him, and are as wicked as themselves, are more excusable. Whereas the Hypocrite, who professes himself not only a Subject, but a sworn Servant, and seems to resort often to him for Direction, finds thereby Credit with those who mean well, and by degrees betrays them out of their ill guarded Innocence and Virtue: And when they have by often praying unto him, hardened their Hearts against him, and find that their Combinations with Persons of several and confessed Wickednesses, and such as they themselves abhor, do yet prosper to carry on their own Designs and Interest, they begin to believe that God is well-pleased with their Hypocrisy, their Malice and Uncharitableness: And because he keeps Silence, interrupts not the Career of their Successes with some signal Judgment, but suffers them to prevail in all their Enterprises against those whom they hate, and would destroy; they arrive at that bold and blasphemous Impudence, as to challenge the Almighty Providence to be the Patron, Director and Defender of those monstrous and unparallel'd Wickednesses they have committed against the Letter of the Law and Commandments, and make their Success an Argument of their having done that which pleases him; and against those his Children, who out of the Conscience of their Obedience to him, rather submit to any Misery, loss of Estate, of Liberty, of Country, and of Life, than they will concur in any Thing (how prosperous soever) which he hath forbidden them to do. Whereas, if what we do were therefore well done, because we succeed in it according to our Wish, and what we suffer were therefore justly and deservedly inflicted on us, because God suffers ill Men to exercise that Power over us, the Guilt and Infamy of *Cain*, and of *Judas* himself, have been very unreasonably derived, and kept up to these Times; and all the blessed Martyrs, and our Saviour himself, have lost their Rewards, by having undergone no more Punishment than was due to their Crimes and Offences. But a sharper Sentence cannot be pronounced against these profane Arguments than is already given, *What hast thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou shouldest take my Covenant in thy mouth?* Since then the Compendium of our Religion is no more than this, that we live honestly and innocently for the Love of God, and praise him for

whatsoever shall befall us, and praise him by living well, without which all our other Praises are no better and no other than Reproaches, and by doing this, we shall make such an Account at the last and fiery Day, as he expects, and will allow and reward; let us not perplex our selves with imposing dark, and intricate, and controverted Points, upon our Understanding and Judgment; spend our time in debating what we should Think, in which no two Men agree nor disagree in all Particulars, and never consider what we are to Do, which admits very few Differences; but let us order our Conversation aright, be just, and humble, and charitable to all Men; and whatsoever Discouragements and Miseries befall us by being so, rely on God Almighty for our Salvation, which we have his Promise that he will not then fail to shew us.

GOOD God, who art the Judge of Heaven and Earth, and will not now long defer to summon and call both before thee to receive thy last and irrevocable Judgment; give us Grace so to apply our selves to prepare our Account for that Day, that we may not be surprized nor confounded at the Approach of it. Forgive us all our Sins, especially those which we have committed or contrived at that time when we have pretended Devotion to thee; and that wicked Presumption, when we have concluded that what we did, though against the Light of our own Consciences, did please, and was acceptable to thee, because we had the Success we desired. Infuse thy Holy Spirit into us, that we may offer unto thee the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving from the Altar of our Hearts, kindled with true Zeal to thee, and Charity to all the World: Make us so to watch all our Thoughts, and Words, and Actions, that we may appear unblameable before thee, and obtain the Salvation of our Souls, which thou didst redeem at the inestimable Price of thy Blood. Amen.

P S A L M LI.

IF we could live without Sin, and offending God at all, it may be we should be more perfect than God intended to make us, his Majesty delighting and magnifying himself no less in the Exercise of his Mercy, than in the Power of his Creation: And there never having yet been Man (he only excepted who was God and Man) without grievous Sins and Transgressions, and they whose great Examples of Piety we are principally enjoined to follow, having been notoriously guilty of some one greater and more exorbitant Crime, than many who have not yet been able to imitate the better Part of their Life; we shall therefore perform our Part, if after we have through Weakness, Incogitancy, and Compliance with the Affections and Passions of human Nature, been transported into an Action or Resolution unbecoming good Christians, and inconsistent with our Duty to God, we do seriously and heartily grieve and bewail the Ill we have done, abhor our selves for it, and repent from the Bottom of our Hearts, with that true and honest Sense of our Wickedness, that we would not again commit the same Sin, for all the Benefit this World could afford, though we were sure to be again pardoned for it. We are all ready enough to apply and make use

of the Example of other Mens Sins to our Advantage and Comfort, but never think of the Rigor, of the Penance they afterwards enjoined themselves, and their Repentance by which they expiated those Sins: We are very glad to find, that any whom God hath owned for his Children, have at any time committed a Murther, and with that Instance think to excuse all our Passion, and Rage, and Revenge; or that they have been Adulterers, and thereby hope that all our inordinate Heat, all our unchaste Fires kindled by our Excesses, and laboured License, continually fanned and blown by all the Artifice we can devise, lest they might expire, shall be forgotten and pardoned; without once calling to Mind or practising the Sorrow and Agony with which their Hearts bled and were broken, before they could obtain Remission of those Trespases; how they wept, and fasted, and prayed, and would not forgive themselves, before God forgave and pardoned them. Indeed we all talk of Repentance, and put the highest Value upon it, confess the Necessity, and magnify the Power of it, and are very willing to believe, and very glad that it can wipe out the Marks and Stains of all that we have done amiss: But then, we do but talk of it, look upon it as a Commodity lying by us, as a Winter Garment that we can put on when the cold Weather presses; a Virtue we can practise and betake our selves to, when Afflictions and Sickness overtake us, and when the Pleasure and Delight of our Sins hath left us: Nay, too many consider it only as an Antidote, and to be kept as an Antidote to be taken only after Poison; and take Poison the oftner, and with the more Confidence, to try the Goodness of the Antidote: We do without scruple, and with Alacrity, engage our selves in Actions of known and confessed Unlawfulness, and which appear to us to be such at the Time we commit them, merely upon the Purpose and Resolution to repent them, and the Assurance that our Repentance, come when it will, must be acceptable, and wipe out all our Transgressions. Whereas, we have not in the whole Book of God's Mercies, one Example of any Man, who barefaced, and upon Deliberation, committed an Act against the Light of his Conscience, (what secret Purposes soever he might have to repent it) that ever expiated that Offence by Repentance, that is, ever appeared to have repented it: And though we must not say that God will ever reject a true and a hearty Repentance, in how late a Minute soever it be offered to him, yet we may safely and reasonably fear, that he will never vouchsafe the Grace of Repentance to them, who upon the wicked Presumption of it increase the Number of their Sins; and our daily Experience of our selves, and Observation of other Men tells us, that one Error purposely committed, vitiates and prostitutes the Mind, and leaves us more inclined to Pride and Impudence for the Defence, than prepared with Modesty and Ingenuity to retract it.

There is not in the whole Exercise or Discourse of Christian Religion any one thing with which we so much offend and affront God Almighty, so grossly endeavour to cheat him, and so palpably do cheat our selves, as in the Practice of that which we call Repentance, and Grief, and Sorrow for our Sins, which we are so unskilled in, that we feel less true Grief of Heart for offending him, (especially if it be so secret an Offence, as is done only in his Sight, and can be concealed from the World) than for any other Mischance that befalls us in our Life: Not that we cannot grieve, and be sorry, and afflicted sufficiently, when we please to think the Cause worthy of it: If we have accidentally done

any thing (for we never purpose those Offences) which displeases a great Person upon whom we depend, and who can prejudice us in our Pretences, we quickly repent it, even before it appears that we did ill, and even so heartily, that the Vexation and Anguish of it takes our Sleep from us, and impairs our Health: If we lose an Office, or a Son, or a Friend, our Grief and Sorrow is so immoderate, that no Consideration of Nature, of Necessity, or Providence itself can allay it, or comfort us; we neglect our Meat, and Sleep, and Exercise, and the Paleness of our Cheeks, and Hollowness of our Visage, declares that we are afflicted at our Hearts. When did the Sense of our Sins, the Conscience of having broke one or all of God's Commandments, produce any such Distemper in us? When did the Memory of a Surfeit or a Slander, of an Act of Oppression or an Act of Uncleaness committed by us, the Remembrance of our Rebellion, Profaneness and Blasphemy cast us upon our Bed, change our Complexion, or draw a Tear from us? We may be troubled at the Discovery of our Crimes, and sorry that they are exposed to the Justice of the Law, and Censure of the World, but for the having committed them, and thereby incensed God against us, we feel no Pain, no kind of Remorse; yet if we proceed so far in the Mask of Devotion, as to pronounce a Prayer or two, and profane some of *David's* Expressions, which flowed from the Agony and Extasy of his Soul, in our hasty and inconsiderate Ejaculations, we call it Repentance and Sorrow for our Sins, and persuade our selves, that all our Iniquities are blotted out: But God well enough discerns our Mountebankry, and the Difference of our Sorrow, and how merry our Hearts are in those Addresses; and it is to be feared, is so far from looking upon that Sacrifice of Fools as an Expiation for, that he adds it to our Account as an Aggravation of what we have done amiss. We shall do well therefore, if we do indeed think Repentance to be necessary, and that it is a true and a hearty Sorrow and Grief for the Ill we have done, and a serious Purpose and Resolution never to do the like again, to be sure that we are possessed with such a Sorrow, as we account Sorrow in other Cases; to exact such Symptoms of Grief from our selves, before we believe that we do repent; such Sadness of Mind, such Dejection of Spirit, such Impression upon all our Faculties, as is observed in us, when we are heartily afflicted for any worldly Loss or great Misfortune. When we are shut up in a Mourning-Chamber at the Funeral of a Wife, a Son, a Friend, if a Man should find us drinking, and dancing, and playing, under the Secresy of that Retirement, would he think us to be much perplexed in that Solemnity of Sorrow? What must God think of us, when he sees us locked up in our Closet, under the Pretence of grieving for our past Sins, and reconciling our selves to him by some new Covenant of Obedience and Amendment of Life, against the receiving of the Sacrament, or any other time we chuse to mock him with a more solemn Shew of Devotion; and discerns our Hearts as full of Pride and Jollity as ever, as full of Design and Contrivance to sin more prosperously, and with such Skill and Reservedness, that the World may not take notice of our Malignity; as, if like Epicures, who purge only to make room for new Riots and Excess, we used all that Preparation and Formality to dispose our selves into a better Order and Method of sinning, and instead of repenting what we have done, only to remove those importunate and crying Sins which most disquiet our Conscience, farther off from our Memory, that we may be no more inter-

rupted

rupted with their Vexation; and as if our Religion were nothing else, but decently to demean our selves in some formal Service with downcast Looks, and unrowling or fixt Eyes, whilst the Ceremony lasts, without any relation to our inward Thoughts, and pious Purposes for the future Amendment of our Lives?

These are not the broken and contrite Hearts which God expects from us, the Spiritual Sacrifices which oblige him to an Acceptance; this is not * *to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service*: No Stock or Dispensation of his Mercies will extend to blot out the Transgressions of such impious Penitents: We must be less indulgent to our selves, if we hope that he shall take Compassion on us. It is the Weight and Pain, and intolerable Torment of Sin that is one of the princial Reasons which prevail with him to give us Ease; and if we are so senseless as not to feel the Burthen of it, we are without the Power and Force of that Argument towards our Relief. It is the Terror and Ghastliness with which our Guilt appears to us, whilst it is in our Sight, that gets God to remove that terrifying Object from us, and from his own Remembrance; and if we have a trick to keep it out of our Sight, by putting it out of our Mind, or by dressing and adorning it with specious Excuses and Distinctions render it less unbeautiful and unpleasant to our View, we are at least without that Motive towards the obtaining his Pardon. Our Bones must be first broken, before he can heal them, and we must have no Joy in our selves left, before he will send us Matter to rejoice in; otherwise we do but wash and purge our selves, and remain as foul and black as we were before; it must be his Mercy, no Artifice of our own, that can make us clean. Let us therefore no longer dally with God Almighty, and forfeit our precious Souls by a pretended and feigned Repentance, but let us take every Sin to Heart, and be seriously troubled and afflicted for them, and as heartily for those which are only known to God and our own Consciences; our first Thoughts of Pride, Ambition and Envy, of Lust, Revenge and Covetousness, which produced Rebellions, Murthers, Adulteries, and Sacrilege, of which the World cannot convince us; as for those Crimes which have been publickly acted, and have exposed us to Justice, Infamy, or other Disadvantages; for those by which we have prospered, and gotten Honours and Offices, and for those in which we have been apprehended, and which have brought us to Misery and Calamities. This will awaken him to take Pity and Compassion on us; and when we are faint and languishing, and even dead with Shame and Sorrow for our Transgressions, he will raise our Spirits, and give us such an inward Assurance of his Pardon and Remission, that all our Sorrow shall be turned into Joy, and our Offences be only remembred as Monuments of his Favour and Bounty, and to keep miserable Sinners from Despair, without any Reproach to us, to whom they shall never be imputed. He will then make us Instruments to convert other Men, by publishing the wonderful Goodness and Mercy we have found, and by living with that exemplary Meekness and Charity to all Men, with that Gentleness and Candor to all who have offended and injured us, that all shall desire to be like unto us; and seeing our Integrity, Uprightness and Humility, shall glorify our Father that is in Heaven.

Gracious

GRacious and merciful Father, who hast vouchsafed thy Grace to the most grievous and notorious Sinners, when they have turned to thee, and didst wonderfully save the Thief upon the Cross for faithfully calling upon thee in the last Article of his Breath, look down upon us, and from that unimpairable Stock of thy Mercies, and according to the multitudes of that, blot out our Offences. Teach us by thy good Spirit, truly and heartily to repent us of our Sins, especially for those which have been useful and beneficial, and by which we have prospered in the World; those Hypocrisies and Pretences to Religion and Conscience, by which we have got Credit to mislead others, and Power and Authority to oppress those whom we could not mislead or pervert. Let us feel much more Grief and Anger, and Vexation in our Bosoms, for what we have done amiss to thee, than for any Thing we have done inconveniently to our selves; and for the Wrong we have done to thee in breaking thy Commandments, than for the Injury and Damage we have sustained by others, who have broken all Laws Divine and Human: When thou hast given us this Grace of Repentance, and hearty Sorrow; accept what thou hast given, and wipe and blot out all our Transgressions, and then turn thy loving Countenance towards us, and restrain the devouring Rage and Fury of our Enemies, who desire utterly to destroy us, and to root out our Names and Memories from the Earth. Amen.

P S A L M LII.

THOU shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue, neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it comes*, says Eliphaz in Job, when he would discourse of those Acts of Power and Omnipotence which none but God himself can do; and indeed a petulant, malicious, detracting Tongue, carries always somewhat of Poyson and Venom in it, that a less Protection than that of the Almighty cannot secure us from it; it wastes and destroys private Families, by kindling Divisions, Contentions and Animosities in it; and it dissolves Kingdoms and Governments, by raising Jealousies, Slanders and Calumnies against Princes and Magistrates, thereby lessening the Awe and Reverence due to them, which are the Seed-plots of Sedition and Rebellion. † *A backbiting tongue hath disquieted many, and driven them from nation to nation; strong cities hath it pulled down, and overthrown the houses of great men: Whoso hearkeneth unto it shall never find rest, and never dwell quietly,* says the Son of Syrach: *Many have fallen by the edge of the sword, but not so many as have fallen by the tongue:* Not only by the lying, flandering, false Tongue, which commonly in a short Time loses its Credit and Reputation to do Mischief, a seasonable Discovery and Detection of its Wickedness preventing the Progress of it, and sometimes repairing the Wrong it hath done; but by the busy informing whispering Tongue, which spoils Truths in the repeating them, and tells them to those to whom they ought not to be known. This Looseness and Activity of the Tongue, is one of the greatest Villanies in

* Job v. 21.

† Eccl. xxviii. 14, 16, 18.

in the Nature of Man, and proceeds from the most confirmed Habit of Malice in our Hearts; when we delight to tell all we see and hear, to make Comments and Glosses of our own, (how reasonable soever) upon what other Men say or do, or tell it to those who will do so; when we take Advantage of Mens Passions, Infirmities or Follies, and report that to be said or done maliciously, which was said or done but hastily, and it may be innocently, and yet may be capable enough justly of an ill Interpretation. Beauty, and the Pleasantness of a very handsome Object, may surprize our Eye and Sight, and it may be, engross it too much, and make us for a Time care to see nothing else; and Passion and Rage may transport the Hand to an Act of Violence, and of Blood, and yet the Heart may never consent to the Lust, or to the Murther: But this Spirit of Detraction and Appetite to deprave or speak ill of Men, to traduce or undervalue Men we know not, or not know enough to be able to judge of them, never proceeds from a sudden Heat and Passion, (inconsiderate, froward, sharp Expressions may,) but from a formed, impotent Rancor in our Nature, and is so far from doing what it does not intend to do, that it seldom does half the Mischief it purposes and desires to do; it is fraught with an unnatural and ungenerous Spight, which preys upon the Dead equally with the Living, and when it hath worried Men to the Grave, begins a new Persecution against their Memories.

* *If thou blow the spark it shall burn; if thou spit upon it, it shall be quenched; and both these come out of thy mouth,* says Ecclesiasticus; which it may be, signifies no more than that of St. James, † *Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing*: It is but as the Mettle and Temper of the Tongue is; it may be so sharp and keen, that it may pierce deeper, and enter farther than any Weapon. || *The stroke of the whip maketh marks in the flesh, but the stroke of the tongue breaketh the bones*, destroys that Credit and Reputation that supports us. A wise and temperate Tongue will break Bones too, Bones that should be broken; *A soft tongue breaketh the bone**, says Solomon, mollifies and softens all perverse and froward Humours, as senseless and obstinate as Bones: There is a comforting, relieving, and repairing Tongue, as well as a destroying, and a devouring Tongue, and the one is as much blessed as the other can be cursed. ‡ *The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life*, nothing comes out of it but what is wholesome and medicinal; it administers Counsel and Comfort to Men in Distress, and to those who are destitute of either; it improves and spreads the Fame of good Men, thereby making the Way easy for them to do more good; lessens and suppresses the Imputations and Charges which are too severely cast abroad to make Men odious, who are not so good as they ought to be, and endeavours by charitable and modest Informations to mend and reform them: It is so religious in the keeping of Secrets, that no Injury or Provocation can make him think it warrantable to disclose them, and thinks others Example no excuse for doing what ought not to be done: It is so great a Lover of Truth, that he can never be induced to utter a Falshood; and as reserved from publishing and divulging all Truths, which unreasonably uttered, and loosely communicated, produce as much Mischief as Lies and Slanders. So that, though less than the immediate Protection and Vigilance of Heaven cannot shelter us from the Assaults

6 N

and

* Eccl. xxviii. 12.
† Prov. xxv. 15.

† James iii. 10.
‡ Prov. x. 11.

|| Eccl. xxviii. 17.

and Wounds too, of the whispering, double, back-biting Tongue, yet it is very much in our own Power and Choice, whether we will have such a Tongue of our own: It is not in our Power to do what we will; we do not only very often want Ability to do the Good we desire to do, to be as liberal and as charitable as our Nature inclines us to, but we seldom are able to do the Mischief we are willing; we cannot oppress all we wish to oppress, nor destroy all we would be glad were destroyed; but it is in our Power to speak what we will, at least it is in our Power not to speak, to be silent, which next speaking well is best. We may utter all devouring Words, * *and with our tongue set on fire the whole course of nature, as itself is set on fire of hell*: And we may if we please be so gentle, and meek, and charitable in our Language, that † the very moving of our Lips will assuage Mens Grievs, and their Rage too, which is more violent than their Grievs. We have no Member so entirely at our Devotion, and so absolutely within our Jurisdiction as our Tongue, and that is the Reason that God is more severe against the Excess and Wickedness of the Tongue, than of any other Member: He hath been so compassionate of the Passion and Fury of our Nature, that he hath pardoned Murther; and so indulgent to the Warmth and Riot of our Blood, that he hath pardoned Adultery: But he hath left us no Monument of his Mercy towards the venomous, traducing, backbiting Tongue; the busy, mischievous, informing Slanderer; the hypocritical Contriver of the Ruin of innocent Men, and their Reputations; but hath denounced an eternal War against them; not contented that they shall be exposed to Infamy and Want in this World, and to the Mirth and Scorn of all good Men, unless he likewise roots up all their Hopes of Salvation in that World that is to come.

It will therefore very much concern us to follow the Wise Man's Counsel, and || *to weigh our words in a balance, and make a door and bar for our mouth*; if licentious and unbridled Thoughts will, in spite of all our Watches and Guard, steal into our Hearts, let us be sure that no unruly Words break out of our Mouth; and if in the Crowd of our Language and Expressions, some inconsiderate, rash and imprudent Words escape from us, at least let them not be malicious and detracting Words, to wound the Credit and good Name of our Neighbours: Let us inform and instruct the Weak without Insolence, and reprove and advise the Wilful without Bitterness; let us do all good Offices towards the advancing the Reputation of those who desire to advance God's Glory and the publick Peace, and all charitable Offices towards those who are in Misery and Distress, by what Means soever they fell into it; let us endeavour: *to strengthen all men with our mouth, and that our speech may drop upon them*: That ‡ *they may wait for us as for the rain, and open their mouth wide as for the latter rain*; and then God will bless and protect, and prosper us, against all the Violence and all the Calumnies which aim at our Destruction.

GOOD God, who wilt require an Account for every idle Word and wilt severely punish every malicious and wicked Word we shall speak, give us Grace and Discretion to weigh all we say, and to abstain from all false, calumniating, and censorious Speeches, and to love to speak well of Men, that we may deserve to have others speak

* James iii. 6.

† Job xvi. 6.

‡ Job xvi. 5.

|| Chap. xxix. 22, 23.

|| Eccl. xxviii. 25.

Speak well of us. Defend us from the bitter and virulent Tongues of our Enemies, who, to justify the Wrong and Oppression they have wrought, devise Lies, and load us with Reproaches, and false Imputations. O Lord, vindicate thy self, and secure thy Church from profane, blasphemous, and sacrilegious Tongues: Defend thy Servant the King from flattering and hypocritical Tongues, and from malicious and rebellious Tongues; and deliver us all from proud and detracting Tongues, and root out all such Tongues out of their dwelling Place, out of a Capacity of doing farther Mischief, what Portion soever thou decreest to them in the other World. Amen.

P S A L M LIII.

THERE are very learned Men who distinguish and put a great Difference between the insipient Man and the Fool; and make the first only to concern him who is without a competent Judgment and Understanding in vulgar and common Things, but will have the latter, the Fool, a Man who is wise enough in human Matters, but intent only on them, and without any Knowledge or Care of what is heavenly. Indeed, the simple, shallow, weak Man, hath too much Modesty, too much Undervaluing and Doubt of himself, to contemn God Almighty, or to think irreverently of him; he may be without the clear Notions of him, not understand what kind of Devotion or Obedience he is to pay to him, but he hath always an Awe, and Fear, and Estimation of him, and makes some confused Addresses and Applications to him, as to somewhat that can do him good: They are inquisitive and knowing, as well as proud Men, who have raised themselves to the Confidence and the Courage to determine, or to say to themselves, that there is no God, or that whatever he is, he does not at all consider what they are, or what they do; there must go Wit, and Parts, and Knowledge, and Industry to make such Fools; meer Nature cannot do it. We see the great Architects of Atheism, who most propagate the Doctrine of neglecting and undervaluing, and then defying the divine Providence, pretend to be absolute Masters of Reason, and to raise all their Conclusions upon that Foundation; so that we may charge them, and they had rather we should charge them with any thing, rather than with Ignorance. Let God look down upon them whilst he will, they will not look up to him, nor vouchsafe to seek him, how much soever he puts himself in their way, by giving Success to what they go about, or by interrupting and disappointing their Designs: What their Affections and Appetites incline them to, they pursue violently; and if they are able to compass what they desire, they think it supine Folly to be restrained by Conscience; and when they have gone through with what they propose (be it to the Ruin of Church and State, to the Confusion of all Laws divine and human, and even to a general Desolation) they make no scruple to conclude and publish, (which is a Progress the modern Atheists have only made, those of old being more modest, and content but to think it, to say it in their Heart) that God doth therefore like and approve all they have done, because he suffered them to do it, when in truth, they believe that it was not in his Power to restrain them: Above all, they hold nothing so ridiculous, and laugh at none so much, as at those

those who are not able to help themselves, yet think that God will help them; and when they are overwhelmed with Distresses, robbed of their Estates, and banished from their Countries, refuse to submit to, and comply with the Power that is able to do all that, upon a Confidence that God will in the End relieve them, and give them Deliverance from that Oppression and Tyranny.

But these wise discerning Fools find themselves at last most deceived; and that their Acts of Pride, Cruelty and Oppression, which they fed upon so luxuriously as the best Nourishment, proves their Poison, and gnaws the Entrails with continual inward Torment. God deals with them in his usual Method, and punishes them with the Want of that which they most wasted: As licentious and prodigal Persons, who have spent their Time and their Fortunes in continual Excesses, Riots and Surfeits, frequently perish for want of what is necessary for the Subsistence and Preservation of Nature; so, these Men who have unthriftily laid out, and spent and wasted their Reason, in Things and Matters above Reason, and which move in a higher Sphere, and have impiously presumed to measure, and weigh, and controul by their Reason what Reason cannot comprehend, shall in the Conclusion be destroyed for want of that Caution and Discretion which very natural Reason might and ought to supply them with; and Fear, * which is nothing else but a betraying of the Succours which Reason offers, shall transport, and dismay, and confound them, when they are in truth threatned with nothing, that is, the Thing they are frightened with is not worthy of their Fear.

G Racious Father, suffer us never to entertain and harbour such proud and arrogant Opinions of our selves, and our own Understandings, as may produce impious Opinions of thee, and of thy Providence; and by thy immediate Protection defend us from those, who having no Fear or Reverence of thee, make no Conscience of persecuting and destroying us. Preserve thy Church from the Invasion of those who contemn thy Name; and let not Christian Religion suffer by the malicious and cursed Wit of those, who think thou canst not, because thou dost not protect those who put their Trust in thee, from their present Oppression, and prosper whilst they do think so. Amen.

P S A L M LIV.

WE can never be so well provided to resist the Malice, and Injury, and Oppression of our Enemies, (be our Advantage in the World what it can be) as not to need Assistance from our Prayers; and our Condition may be such, that we have nothing else to preserve us against that Rage and Fury, no other Comfort and Hope against the Power and Success of those who persecute us, but in our Prayers; and the Condition of those who oppress us may be such, as we ought to use no other Resistance and Defence, how well soever we are supplied with other Means. If our lawful Prince oppress us, and incensed by wicked and corrupt Ministers, or assisted by false and treacherous Friends, endeavours

* Wisd of Sol. xvii. 12.

deavours to destroy us, we have no other remedy, no other shelter than in and from our Prayers to God Almighty, that he will divert that Storm, and protect us from that unjust Persecution; Those are the defensive Arms we must use and trust to; and if we would use them steddily and vigorously, and did seriously remember and believe the signal Victories and Deliverances which have been obtained by those Weapons, without the Concurrence of any other Activity, we should not be so ready to think our Case desperate, when we are reduced to that single Defence and Protection. We are not sure that God did ever more absolutely determine and purpose any thing, than that * *Hezekiah* should die of the Sickness he then laboured under; and yet his Prayers and his Tears had that Efficacy, that they compelled God to reverse that Decree, and add Fifteen Years to his Life; that Prayer that he made, and those Tears which he shed when he turned his Face to the Wall; there must be nothing of Vanity, nothing of Ostentation in that Devotion that must prevail with him: And there are many of the Fathers of Opinion, that this very *Psalms* was composed by *David*, in the very Time that by the Treachery of the *Ziphims*, *Saul* was brought, and had actually besieged him in those Mountains; and that whilst he was praying, the Messengers brought the Tidings of the Invasion by the *Philistines*, whereby he was compelled to give over the other unjust Enterprize, and so that he saw himself delivered whilst he prayed to be so. God is not less in love with Prayers now, than he hath ever used to be; nor are our Distresses greater than he hath in all times redeemed those from whom he hath thought worthy of his Mercy. Therefore if we would pour out our Prayers with that true Piety and Faith of Soul, as our Predecessors in Affliction and Calamities have done; if he saw our single and entire Confidence in him, severed from any Stratagems of our own Imaginations, we might reasonably hope that he will send such Jealousies and Divisions amongst our Enemies, that they shall rise one against another, till they are all destroyed by themselves; or, that in the Instant, when they intend to finish our Destruction, and to cut us off from the Earth, they shall receive some Alarm of Danger, that shall call them to provide rather for their own Security, than to prosecute the Extirpation of their innocent Brethren; or that he will by some other extraordinary Ways, rescue us from that Ruin that seems ready to swallow us up. It is not using our other Weapons ill, but not using this of Prayer at all, that hath brought us to this low and even hopeless Condition we are in; and it must be an humble and a hearty Practice of this Remedy, that must supply us with other Remedies, and make the most probable ones prosper to our Restoration; and prevail with God, (who only can relieve us) to turn all the Evils they have intended to us upon the Heads of our Enemies.

Almighty God, by thy own right Hand save and relieve us, who are ready to perish, and to be made a Sacrifice to the Pride and Malice of cruel and merciless Men. Look down upon us, who look up wholly to thee, and have no other hope but in thy Mercy: Thou hast seen our Sufferings, and the Calamities we have undergone, protect and deliver us for thy Names Sake. Look down likewise upon those who will not look up to thee; who blaspheme thy Name, profane thy Church, rebel against thy own Ordinance, and murder those

6 O

* 2 Kings-xx.

those who for Conscience sake refuse to concur with them in their Wickedness: Observe their Counsels, watch their Designs, and disappoint their cruel Purposes. O hear the Voice of our Prayer, and let our lamentable Cry pierce thy tender and compassionate Ear; that those who unjustly persecute us may no longer prosper, but that we may offer to thee our Sacrifice of Prayer, Praise and Thanksgiving, in our own Country, from whence we are banished, and in that blessed Form of Worship that was happily established there. Amen.

P S A L M LV.

I*S it not a grief unto death, when a companion and friend is turned to an enemy*? says the Son of Syrach: There can be little question, but † if a faithful friend be the medicine of life, the Loss of such a Cordial, or the Absence of it, must very much endanger our Health, and disquiet our Repose; we cannot well be without it an Hour: But if this precious Antidote be stoln from us and adulterated, so much Poison infused to it, as masters and destroys all its Virtue, and then returned to us so much the same in Shape, Colour and Composition, that we cannot discern any alteration, nor suspect any Loss or Decay of Spirit; if our Friend retain the same Complexion and Face towards us, make still the same Professions of Affection and Kindness to us, and be really changed and corrupted in his Heart, and combined with those who desire to destroy us, it is no wonder if we find our selves in great Danger, and know not well how to provide for our Security. || Job himself was even shaken, when he found that his familiar Friends had forgotten him, and that they were not ashamed to make themselves strange to him; but his Calamity was at the highest, and he knew not how to carry his Complaint higher, than that all his inward Friends abhorred him, and they whom he loved were turned against him; he reckoned himself only escaped with the Skin of his Teeth, that he had nothing left. Indeed the Distresses and Dangers we are subject to are hardly remediable, when they who by intimate Conversation know our Nature, and to whom we have communicated our Purposes, Counsels and Designs, prove treacherous and false to us, and concur with the Envy and Malice of our Enemies; when they instruct our Adversaries who are to treat with us, what advantage to make of our Hopes, and of our Fears, and of those Infirmities of Nature, which none but our bosom Friends could discern; when upon the Information and Advertisement they give as Friends, they lead us to such Conclusions and Resolutions, and then betray those Resolutions to them against whom they are taken; there can hardly be shelter from such Treachery: We may very well lose our Courage, and be even overwhelmed with the Fear and Horror of the Danger that hath encompassed us. In our open, and avowed, and declared Enemies, there is little Peril; Vigilance and Resolution will carry us through. If our Force and Power be not so equal to theirs, that we dare contend boldly with them; we can retire, or directly fly to avoid them, and till we recover new Strength hide our selves in that manner, that they shall not be able to find where we are, or if they do, it shall be in such a Place as they shall not be able to invade us: But if they who fly with us, fight*

* Eccl. xxxvii. 2.

† Chap. vi. 16.

|| Job xix. 14, 3, 19.

for them who pursue us, they who have the highest Obligations to us, and profess to have no other Ends than those we drive at, keep Intelligence with those who undermine us, and labour jointly with them in that Enterprize; if they, upon whose Faith and Friendship we rely for Conduct, wickedly carry us into the Ambushes of our mortal and malicious Enemies, less than a Miracle cannot rescue or preserve us from the entire Ruin they themselves propose to bring us to.

As the Danger is almost inevitable, so the Grief and Agony that attends it is sharper, and more troublesome than the Danger; it bereaves us of that Composure, and Temper, and Serenity of Mind, which usually relieves us in all other Accidents. We prepare and fortify our selves by Deliberation, and wise Foresight of what probably may happen, against the ordinary Blows and Assaults of Fortune, and the Contingences of human Life; so that it is our fault, if upon the simple Successes of those with whom we maintain Difference, upon the Loss of our Fortune, upon the Death of Friends, (which we know must be at some time, and therefore are or should be always provided or prepared for it) we are so surprized, as to be deprived of an ordinary Constancy and Virtue of Mind to support us: But absence of the least Jealousies or Suspicion of our Friends, of the least Imagination that they may betray us, is a Part of that Generosity and Integrity of our Nature, which makes us unworthy to be abused: They, whose Affection and Fidelity is unjustly distrusted, having a Provocation, or some Excuse for failing: so that the discovered Treachery of a Friend does at once astonish all the Faculties of the Mind, and render them useless, as a Blow on the Head does make all our other Limbs unserviceable whilst the Trance continues; and when we recover Sense enough to find we are hurt, and consider the Hand that hath done it, we are so confounded with Grief and Anger, and Sorrow and Shame, and even with our own Love and Kindness, and Pity towards the Apostates, that we cannot think of the natural Remedies and Applications. *David* was so lost and confounded with the Unkindness of *Absalom's* Rebellion, that he could not compose himself to make any Preparation or Provision for the Resistance and Opposition; and all his Senses were so engrossed and possessed with the Agony and Smart of his Unnaturalness, that he felt not the Treason and Malice of *Shimei's* Reproaches, though he had made War with his Hands as well as his Tongue, and threw Stones at him as well as cursed him: * *Behold my son which came forth of my bowels seeketh my life, how much more now may this Benjamite do it? Let him alone, and let him curse*, says the passionate Father, when he might have had Justice done upon the profane and wicked Captive. And we may very reasonably and safely believe, that our Saviour himself sustained much more Trouble from the Combination and Treachery of *Judas* in the betraying him, than from all the Indignities and Violence offered to him by the Jews. The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* did like themselves, and like the Persons they professed to be: And *Pilate* proceeded with as much Tenderness, and as much Justice too, as was naturally to be expected; he would fain have found Expedients to save him: And the People were no madder, or more importunate for Mischief than they used to be: but that a Disciple and an Apostle, one whom he had trusted above others, should contribute to, and contrive his Destruction, gave him more than ordinary Trouble at the Thought of it, † *He was troubled in spirit*:
He

* : Sam. xvi. 17.

† John xiii. 21.

He knew the Scandal it might bring upon his Doctrine by the Artifice of the malicious *Jews*, and the extream Grief it would be to all the rest of his Disciples, who might reasonably suspect the Faith of each other, and apprehend they might be all suspected by him, when one who had appeared as innocent and zealous as any, had been corrupted to so odious a Perfidiousness. The Mischief we suffer by the Treachery and Falshood of those we love, being commonly improved, and thereby made incurable, by our being jealous of every body, and throughly trusting none, after we have been so horribly abused by those whom we thought we might trust best, and with more Security; and therefore Confusion and Ruin usually enters at those Breaches. It is one of the principal Signs and Marks of the last Times, which the Book of *Esdra* gives, *When salt waters shall be found in the sweet, and all friends shall destroy one another, then shall wit hide itself, and understanding withdraw itself into his secret chamber**: When Profaneness and Sacrilege shall spring out of Fasting and Prayer, and Treason and Rebellion to Princes shall grow out of humble Professions of Duty and Obedience when wicked Glosses and Interpretations upon Laws and Oaths shall destroy the End for which those Laws and Oaths were made, and that which should be a Security to protect us, is made a Snare to entrap and entangle us, our Wits and Understandings may well forsake us too, and we may easily want Confidence and Courage to erect any shelter for our selves, when we have seen such main Pillars and Foundations moulder and fall away.

But our Comfort is, though we are least able to help our selves in such Exigents, and against such Distresses, we have a Helper if we call faithfully upon him, who sees the Pangs we suffer, the Agony and Fear we endure, and hears the just Noise of our Lamentations; who pities us and abhors them who have betrayed us; and hath prepared Judgment and Punishments of an extraordinary Nature, for those who have found an unnatural and prodigious Way of offending him, by betraying those who trust them: Because they have proposed to themselves Glory, and Honour, and Advantage in this World, without considering the Reward or Punishment in the next, God will not gratify them so far, as to defer their Sufferings till that time they do not trouble themselves with the Thought of, but will first disappoint them of that Harvest they make sure of, and are even ready to reap. He will divide their Counsels and Designs, raise up Emulation, and Contentions, and Animosity amongst themselves; and though they were enough united in their Treachery and Conspiracy against their Friend, against him who trusted them they shall never be of one Mind in dividing the Spoil, and rewarding the Authors of Mischief; so they shall first be without the Benefit of their Wickedness, then they shall grow into Jealousy, and Disreputation and Infamy with all Men, and even with those for whom they prostituted their Faith: † *Instead of a friend become not an enemy, for thereby thou shalt inherit an ill name, shame and reproach*, says the Son of *Sirach*. No more thought of Credit, or Honour, after an infamous Breach of Trust; they shall not be believed though they speak Truth nor regarded though they chance to do well: And when they are ashamed to live, and afraid to die; when Nature is most vigorous, (for they shall not live out half their Days) Death shall seize on them upon the sudden.

4

* 2 Esdras v. 9.

† Eccl. vi. 1.

sudden, and carry them to that Place which was prepared for them from the Beginning, where is weeping, and howling, and gnashing of Teeth.

G Racious God, vouchsafe to hear our Prayers, and let the Voice of our Complaints awaken thee to Mercy and speedy Compassion upon us. Thou knowest our Sufferings, and the Calamity and Desolation of our poor Countrey, which it undergoes by their Treachery, and Pride, and Cruelty, who were trusted by it to preserve the Laws and Liberties of the Kingdom, and who, without that Trust and Confidence, could never have been able to have done that Mischief, and to bring it to the intolerable Misery and Servitude it now undergoes. O divide their Councils, and create Jealousies and Distrusts amongst them, that they may never agree to raise Security to themselves out of that Confusion they have brought upon all others; but let their Credit and Reputation fail to do farther Mischief, and make them odious to all Men as they are to thee; that the Protection of thy Church, of thy Servant the King, and all those who put their Trust in thee, may grow out of their Destruction. Amen.

P S A L M LVI.

A S no question can be made but that God is very well able in an Instant to deliver us from the greatest Dangers that threaten our most immediate Destruction, if he will vouchsafe to be so merciful to us; so, very few do doubt but that if we do repose our entire Trust in him, rely on him with our whole Hearts, he will extend that Goodness to us, and seasonably remove the Oppressions and Afflictions which lie most heavy on us; and till he does so, give us such a Temper of Mind, and so abate the Sharpness of them, as we shall not much feel their weight. It will be therefore worth our most serious Consideration, how it comes to pass, since we all pretend to put our Trust in him, and to depend wholly on his Assistance and Protection; and it is very credible, that People even swallowed up by such devouring Calamities, are very forward and willing to trust any Power that is able and willing to relieve them; that our Miseries every Day increase and multiply upon us, and our Condition appears more incapable of Comfort, more desperate than it was. And since it cannot but fall out to be through the Defect of that Confidence, and the ill Manner of our behaving our selves in it, we may by God's Blessing so discern our Errors of Presumption, Distrust and Murmuring, and the other Weaknesses which perplex us, as to raise a Spirit of Humility and Submission, and upright Trust in him, that cannot fail of bringing us Relief and Protection.

It is not a bold Confidence in God Almighty, when all our own Imaginations and Devices have failed us, and when we know not what to do; nor an importunate, passionate, reiterated calling upon his Name, to take us out of some Streights, or stop us from some Precipice to which our own Folly and Wickedness hath brought us; and when our Despair tells us, that less than a Miracle cannot preserve us, that can constitute such a Trust, as will oblige him to find himself concerned in what we suffer, and so to deliver us from our Sufferings: Nor must we propose and contrive unworthy Ways to deliver our selves, by little Arti-

fices of Hypocrisy, Dissimulation or Perjury, and then trust in him to bless those ill Means for our Preservation. Innocence and Integrity in our Actions, and a declining any crooked Ways which have been presented to us to secure our selves, must be the Foundation upon which that Trust and Confidence must be raised, which must draw God to be propitious to us; such an Innocence, that we have abstained from all foul Crimes with that Chariness and manifest Detestation, that no Malice or Vigilance of our Enemies can justly reproach us; or such an Innocence, (which will not be inferior to the other for our behoof) which hath been created and sprung out of such a pure hearty Repentance for what we have done amiss, as hath reversed all our Sins and Errors. When our Tears have so absolutely washed out all the Marks and Stains which our Sins had imprinted on us, that God himself cannot discern them; those Tears which are so precious a Sacrifice to him, that he suffers not one of them to be lost, but keeps them in a Repository that is never out of his Sight; we shall be then able to challenge him of some Engagement, quote some Text, remember him of some Promise of his own, by which he is obliged, and we are warranted to expect a Deliverance by his Hand; and he will then, that we may not be disappointed in our Trust, disappoint all those who have contrived and prosecuted our Destruction: And if we shall afterwards pay our Vows to him, perform those Promises we have made in our Misery and Affliction, which he will punctually exact from us, he will support us with that constant Favour, that it shall never hereafter be in the Power of our Enemies to entangle us in new Distresses.

*G*racious Father, the Multitude of our Enemies is so great, and their Power so absolute, that they are even ready to swallow us up, and to blot out our Names from amongst the Number of Men; they have perverted our Words, and misinterpreted our Actions, and used all the Means their Craft and Malice can devise, to make our Condition desperate, that we may be compelled to submit to their Oppression and Tyranny: We have no Refuge but to thy Mercy; we renounce all other Hope, and put our Trust entirely in thee for our Deliverance. O look down upon us with thy old Loving-kindness; accept our true Sorrow and Repentance for our Sins, which have brought those heavy Afflictions upon us; and hearken to our Sighs, and behold our Tears which we pour out before thee; and preserve those Tears, that they may be always in thy Sight, to mitigate thy just Judgments against us, and to put thee in mind to deliver us; and that we may render Praises to thee in the Payment of those Vows we have promised. Amen.

P S A L M LVII.

*W*E can never so reasonably promise our selves an extraordinary Protection and Deliverance from whatsoever Calamities or Dangers do most nearly threaten or press us, by some wonderful Act of God's own immediate Power and Vigilance, as when we have out of meer Piety or Conscience, or out of the Obligations of Christian Charity and Compassion, forbore the doing an ill Act which was in our

Power to do, and the doing whereof, according to all human Reason, would for the present have freed us from that Oppression which is most grievous to us; for by that, we declare that we will have no other Refuge but what is agreeable to his good Will and Pleasure. Whereas, they who are ready to lay hold on any Advantage that is offered to do their Enemy Mischief, and in the taking it, prescribe no other Rules to themselves, than what their Enemies would observe if they had the same Opportunity, make it manifest, that they depend on another Security than the Shadow of God's Wings for the passing over of their Calamities. If our Enemies have traduced us with false and unworthy Imputations, and we come to have Credit enough by as scandalous Reports to take away their good Name, and for Truth and Justice sake we forbear to do it, we may be confident that their Tongues (how sharp and venomous soever) shall not be able to hurt us; but that God, by some way or other, will make our Innocence and Uprightness appear through all the Clouds of Prejudice and Calumny which their Malice hath raised about us: If we are unjustly persecuted by a great and powerful Enemy, who in his Rage and Fury would take our Life; and whilst he is using all his Skill to entrap us and get us into his Power, himself falls into our Hands, and it is in our Power to revenge the Wrong he hath done to us, and by taking his Life, prevent any Act of future Violence upon us; and we do out of Piety and Duty, if he be our Prince, or a Person to whom we owe Obedience, or out of Humanity and Generosity, if he be our Equal, refuse to take that Advantage, and spare that Blood which we might shed, and wait God's Leisure for a Deliverance, without any Guilt of our own; we may humbly presume, that he will interpose his Protection on our behalf, and frustrate all Attempts of Violence upon us, if, notwithstanding this Temper and Obligation on our Part, the Malice and Rancor of our Enemies continue.

* *If a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away?* says Saul, when he was convinced of the Integrity of David's Heart, by his not taking Advantage of him in the Cave, where he might securely have destroyed him; and when some of his Friends would have persuaded him, that God had delivered his † Enemy into his Hand, that he might do as seemed good to him. Saul was never so confounded with the Shame of his own Jealousy and Malice, as by this Act of Piety and Magnanimity in David; and though he had long known that he was anointed and appointed by God to reign as King after him, yet he did not so thoroughly believe it, till this great Instance of the Temper of his Mind, and of his relying upon God's Purpose so entirely, that he would not by an Act of his own endeavour to bring that Honour and Security upon himself, sooner than his Wisdom intended it to him: || *Now behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thy hand.* He knew God would not have given to any Man such a present Dominion over all his Passions and Affections, except he had resolved to establish him for the future in Security and Glory: We can never receive a greater Earnest that he will himself wonderfully help us, than when he gives us Grace not to help ourselves by any ill Means that is offered to us.

* 1 Sam. xxiv. 20.

† Ver. 5.

|| Ver. 21.

Merciful

*M*erciful Father, give us Grace in this terrible Storm of Persecution, when our Lives are sought by merciless, cruel, and bloody Men, and our Reputations and good Names wounded by backbiting and venomous Tongues, to rely wholly on thy Goodness and Deliverance; and till thy time comes to remove those Calamities from us, that we may patiently rest under the Comfort and Security of a good Conscience; and not out of anguish and smart of our Sufferings, lay hold on any opportunity to deliver our selves by such Oaths or Promises, or other Compliances, as are contrary to the Duty of good Christians, and good Subjects: Make our Hearts to be so fix'd on thee, that nothing may be of Joy, and Comfort, and Delight to us, but the Conscience of loving, and fearing, and praising thee, with all the Faculties of our Soul; and that we may never swerve from our Obedience to thy divine Will, for thy Son Jesus Christ his sake. Amen.

P S A L M LVIII.

*W*E may believe that in the last and terrible Day, when we are to be arraigned for all the ill Actions, and Words, and Thoughts of our Life, and shall hear Judgments proportionably pronounced against the several Classes of our Sins, the Justice and Anger of God Almighty will not be so sharp and kindled against us for any Offences we have committed of what kind soever, as for those which we have been wilfully guilty of, against the Light and Information of our own natural Reason and Conscience; nay, indeed we are not sure that he will be very severe against us for any Errors, but those. When we speak honestly, profess a high Value and Reverence of Justice, and think it a horrible thing that others should be unjust to us; and yet, when it comes into our Power to practise Injustice towards other Men, and our Ambition, or Profit, or Revenge, may be advanced by so doing, we are deaf to the Precepts of God and Man, and shut our Ears to the wholesome Insinuations which our own Reason, Judgment and Conscience would suggest to us, and proceed with that Uncharitableness and Oppression, as if we knew not that we did ill: This unmanly Wickedness, and delighting to do that to others which we can by no means endure that they should do to us, proceeds not from any Corruption in our Nature, but the Vice and Corruption of our Education: We have not from our Infancy, that Love and Reverence to Truth infused into us that we ought to have; but are industriously taught not to speak as we think, and from thence we think it no fault not to do as we speak. They contract the Sin of Lying into too narrow a Compass, who believe it consists only in the Iniquity and Falshood of the Tongue; how ungenerous, and odious, and mischievous soever that Vice is, yet of all Lies, those of the Tongue are the most Innocent, do the least Mischief: They are the Lies of our Heart, our lying Actions, which do a thousand Times more hurt than our lying Words: When we make specious Professions and Protestations of Religion, of Loyalty, of Law and Justice, and in our Actions advance Profaneness, Rebellion, Tyranny and Oppression; when we profess so entire an Observation of the Dictates of the Truth,

and so severe an Observation of the Rules of Justice, and the Letter of the Law, that we are forward to censure that lawful Authority, to which we ought for Conscience sake to be subject, and to traduce it, if upon any Reason whatsoever of State which we cannot understand, or of Necessity which we cannot judge of, it seems to decline, or exceed the known Line which Right and Justice ought usually to be measured by: And yet if we come our selves to be possessed (how injuriously soever) of Power to controul the known Course and Form of Justice, we make no scruple of removing all Land-marks, confounding the Terms of Right and Wrong, and prescribing no other Measure to our selves in our proceeding, than as it may advance our own monstrous Designs, and suppress all those who for the Love of Truth and Justice, endeavour to oppose, or refuse to comply with us; no Serpent is then fuller of Poision, for the Destruction of what we before pretended so great a Zeal to preserve and maintain, nor Adder deafer to whatsoever can be applied to our Instruction and Reformation: * *They refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears that they should not hear: Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should bear the Law, &c.* says the Prophet *Zechariah*, of those hypocritical Fasters, who would separate themselves at certain Seasons, under Pretence of singular Devotion to God, but would not abstain from † *oppressing the widow nor the fatherless, the stranger nor the poor.* We shall do well to consider what followed this Hypocrisy in Religion, and this Obstinacy and Perverseness in Justice.

Therefore came a great Wrath from the Lord of Hosts: || *Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear, so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the Lord of Hosts.* God is a Second, who never fails if we call upon him as we ought; and knows well how to grapple with our fair-speaking Adversaries, and to proportion Punishments to their Transgressions: Since their Hearts are set upon Mischief, he will bring Sadness of Heart upon them, by taking away, or abridging their Power to do hurt. And there is no question, as good Men find no Grief (next that for their Sins) equal to that they feel for their want of Power to do good; so they who delight in Revenge and Uncharitableness, are not in this World capable of greater Torment, than to find that their Malice cannot reach those whom they would destroy: And they are as willing to have no Teeth at all to feed themselves, as such which are not strong enough to worry those whom they account their Enemies. Since they vainly propose to themselves by their Tyranny and Power, to establish a lasting Greatness to their Names, and to continue as long as the World continues in their Families and Posterity, he will dissolve all their Greatness in their own View, and they shall feel their own Ebb, like unruly Waters after some Deluge, which insensibly sink away, and can no more be found: They shall see all their Hopes melt away like Wax at a Fire, and Destruction come sooner upon them, than the most combustible Matter can grow into a Flame; whilst they who were even at the Brink of Destruction, and ready to be devoured, shall behold this Miracle of God's Mercy and their Deliverance, with that Comfort and Joy, as becomes those who are snatched out of the Fire by divine Providence.

There is a Joy and a Gladness which we may very well justify, and which indeed God expects from us, when Confusion or any signal Judgment

6 Q

4

ment

* Zeck. vii. 11, 12.

† Ver. 10.

|| Ver. 13.

ment befalls wicked and unjust Men; * *for the righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance*; but we may very easily mistake the Joy that is allowed us, and insolently and uncharitably triumph our selves into as great a Guilt as they suffer for: And therefore we have under no Affliction or Calamity more need of Support and Assistance from the good Spirit of God how to behave our selves, than in those Seasons, when those who have most maliciously persecuted us, and are in all Considerations very ill Men, and professed Enemies to Justice, fall under some extraordinary Misery, and suffer as much as they desired to see us suffer: † *Thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother, in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah, in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly, in the day of distress*, says the Prophet *Obadiah*. If our Joy hath a Mixture of Insolence towards the Persons of those who suffer (how justly soever) as Men who have done us wrong, and so are glad of their Misery as a Revenge for what they have done against us, we exceed our Commission, and have no kind of Warrant for such a kind of Rejoicing. No Degree of Malice, and ill Nature, and Wickedness in other Men, can excuse us for a Defect of that Charity, and Meekness, and Compassion, which ought always to be inseparable from our Religion. The Joy then which we are allowed upon these Occasions, must be such as we rather feel our selves, from some inward Warmth and Comfort, than that others may discern from those light Appearances and Gestures which usually attend our Hours of Gladness: It ought to be such a Joy as good and pious Men conceive at the Loss and Death of a Wife, a Son, or a Friend, whom they most dearly loved, and see expire with that Innocence, and Confidence, and Christian Courage, as are the unquestionable Harbingers of a Seat in Heaven; when, though their Eyes are full of Tears, and their Hearts of Grief for the Absence of so precious a Friendship and Conversation, yet they are inwardly exalted too with the Example he hath given them to live and die well, and the Assurance he hath left them of being possessed of all the Happiness and Glory they could wish him. So in the other Case, we may be affected with a devout Delight to see an Example of God's Justice, to the cutting off, and rooting up an infectious Wickedness, that would else spread itself very far; and to the cherishing and supporting Innocence, which might be too much dismayed and dejected, if prosperous Cruelty and Oppression met not with a Check from God's Hand, when it is grown too powerful for the Arm of Flesh; and yet we ought to retain a real Sense of Pity and Sorrow towards the Persons who are so suddenly cast into Misery, and from that Instance of the Inconstancy of human Prosperity, be the more ready to extend our Alms and Charity for their Relief. Above all, in those extraordinary Cases of God's exemplary Punishment and Judgment upon notorious Sinners and Transgressors, who have contemned and derided his Providence, our chiefest Joy ought to be, that he hath vouchsafed as much Grace and Assistance by his holy Spirit, that (how guilty soever we are otherwise) we have abstained from those particular Sins which have so wonderfully drawn down his Warmth and Vengeance upon the Malefactors; and this pious Joy will never produce in us either Pride or Presumption.

3

* *Yer. 10.*† *Obad. i. 12.*

GOOD God, infuse thy blessed Spirit into us, that we may love to speak truly, justly, and uprightly to all Men, and then that our Actions may be suitable to our Words. Defend us from those who practise the contrary, and make their fair and honest Words Snares to entrap us, and then persecute us with their cruel and unmerciful Actions; who, for the Advancement of their own wicked Designs, and of themselves, cast behind them all Order and Rules of Justice, and oppress all who will not concur or comply with them in their Wickedness. Gracious Father, let not their unjust and bloody Hearts find Hands strong and powerful enough to bring their Intentions to pass; but disarm them of Faculties to propagate their Mischief, and let them suddenly be confounded and extirpated, and no Root or Seeds left, from whence such odious Designs may spring and grow up in future Generations; and possess our Hearts with such a modest and godly Joy for their Destruction, as may be acceptable to thee, and procure a Preservation upon our selves. Amen.

P S A L M LIX.

That one would hear me! behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a book; I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me, I would declare unto him the number of my steps, as a prince would I go up unto him*, says Job, when he had refreshed himself with a due examination of the Actions of his Life, and with revolving many Instances of his own Integrity or Uprightness, against the uncharitable Calumnies and Reproaches his unjust Friends charged him withal. Nothing gives us such Support, and administers such Confidence and Courage to expect a Deliverance from God Almighty out of any Persecution or Danger that invades us, as the being sure that we are innocent, that we are without any of those Faults for which we are persecuted: And we may well wish in that Case, that our greatest Adversaries had suggested all they could object against us into Writing, and together with our just Defence, it might be made a Record, which could not but rebound to our Glory and Triumph; and upon that Evidence we may lawfully hope that God will so acquit us, as to deliver us out of the Hands of those who without Cause would destroy us: Not that we may conclude, that guiltless Men cannot be oppressed, even to the Loss of their Lives as well as their Fortunes; or, that ill Men cannot prevail against those who are less ill than they: We may not only be very innocent in those Particulars of which we are condemned and brought into Misery, but therefore condemned because we are known to be innocent; and yet we may be guilty enough in other Particulars, to deserve a greater Punishment and Misery than we undergo: And since every Sin is an Opposition of his Will and Directions, it is God's usual Method to punish Sinners by others who are most opposite to the Sins they practised; as Superstition, and too much Formality in Religion, hath frequently been suppressed by profane and sacrilegious Persons, who have really no Reverence to Religion. We may have heretofore been too rigid

* Job xxxi. 35, 36, 37.

gid and severe in the Execution of the Letter of the Law, in Revenge of Injuries done to our selves, or of Trespases committed against others without such a merciful Indulgence to the Weakness, and Infirmities, and Necessities of Men, or a prudent Consideration of the Spirit and Disposition of Times, and Justice will always admit, and very often require; and then it is no wonder if we are for a time given up to suffer by those who overthrow all Laws, and decline all Order in the Determination of what is right or wrong, just or unjust: It may be we have heretofore so far mistaken or miscalled our Loyalty, Duty and Obedience to Princes, that we have thought our selves obliged to do whatsoever they have commanded us, flattered their Humours, and soothed their Infirmities; been the Ministers to their Pride, Injustice and Oppression, without putting them in mind of the Account they are to make of their Government to him whose Vicegerents they are, or remembering our selves that we are to answer before the Court of Heaven for what we do in these Courts below; and then it is no wonder that our Loyalty is not a Virtue strong enough to preserve us, and that we are exposed as a Prey to those, *† who scoff at kings, and make a scorn of the princes of the earth*; who rebel so prosperously, as to make Treason to be a good Subject; and whilst they unjustly accuse us of being Enemies to our Country, and the Liberty thereof, exercise an absolute Tyranny themselves, and prevail in whatsoever Mischief they do about and undertake.

It is not then such a half Innocence, not being guilty of those particular Crimes and Imputations for which we are for the present persecuted and oppress'd, that will oblige God immediately to redeem and protect us from such Oppression, though our Enemies pursue us without Cause, and have contracted all their Bitterness and Malice against us, for that which is not our Fault or Transgression: He that could have prevented, and can suppress their Fury and their Power when he pleases permits both, to punish us for something else that hath really been our Fault and Transgression. However, it is a comfortable Degree of Innocence, and a good Approach towards God's Mercy, if we can in truth profess, that the Misery and Sufferings we undergo is brought upon us without our Guilt in what our Enemies charge and reproach us; that we suffer for being zealous in our Religion to God, and in our Duty and Allegiance to our King; and we may reasonably and confidently hope that when we have expiated for our former and past Sins, by being made a Scorn and Reproach to our cruel Adversaries, and by a hearty Repentance reversed those Sins, we shall receive the Benefit and Reward of our present Innocence and Integrity; and our faithful Prayers will in the End awaken God to behold the Injustice of our Enemies, and to deliver us because we are innocent. And albeit this Deliverance may be for a Time deferred, till the Fire of Adversity hath well purged the Dross and Corruption which our Prosperity had contracted, till the Anguish and Contempt of our Imprisonment hath brought to our Memory the Pride and Insolence of our Liberty; and the Delays, and Uncharitableness, and Injustice we have found in our Banishment, hath made us revolve how much we our selves have grieved others by our Remissness and Tedioufness in dispatch, and how uncompassionate we have been towards the Affliction and Misery of Strangers in the Days of our Power and Plenty; and we have faithfully resolved to be no more guilty in the

† Habak. i. 10.

same Time, if God shall restore us; yet we are sure our Adversaries who pursue us without a Cause, and the more passionately because they have not a just Cause, because we are innocent, will not find any Excuse for their Injustice and Cruelty towards us, from those Errors and Faults of ours for which they have been permitted to exercise that Injustice and Cruelty upon us. That if God vouchsafe not to be so merciful as a Father, to convert them from their insatiable Thirst of Blood and Tyranny, he will undoubtedly as a Judge confound and extirpate them; and in the mean Time, how secret and dark soever their Designs and Councils are, insomuch as they think themselves secure from the Eyes and Ears of any who can prevent them, he discerns and hears all their Devices: *For inquisition shall be made into the councils of the ungodly, and the sound of his words shall come unto the Lord, for the manifestation of his wicked deeds**, says the Book of Wisdom: Let them whisper their Mischief together never so softly, there will still a Sound thereof reach and pierce his Ear, who does deride and will disappoint their highest Malignity. And though in the Morning and Vigor of their Malice and Success, they apprehend no Opposition, and think it Folly and loss of Time to make any pause or stop in their Career, and that it would be a Shame and a Blemish to them to retract any thing that they have done; there will an Evening come, when they shall be startled at the Sense of their own Madneſs, and Folly, and Perverseness; when the Darkneſs and Blackneſs of their own Despair shall present a clear Prospect of their Wickedneſs, which in the Sunshine of their Power they would not discern; and when confounded with Shame and Sorrow, they will desire to undo, and repair the Breaches they have made; and shall not be able to obtain one Beam of divine Grace and Mercy to light them out of the dismal Darkneſs in which they have heretofore delighted, and are now lost: Whilst we, after we have seen the Revenge, the Wrongs they have done to us by their Discords, and Factions, and Animosities against each other, and upon each other, shall find that our Constancy and Patience for suffering in a good Cause, hath made God propitious to us, and provided a Crown of Glory for our Reward.

GRacious Father, we do from the Bottom of our Hearts confess and acknowledge to thee, that we have been grievous Sinners against thy divine Majesty, and deserved all the Affliction and Misery thou canst suffer us to be reduced to, by the Malice and Power of wicked and rebellious People; yet thou knowest that these Men persecute us without a Cause, and for that which is not any Transgression before thee; but on the contrary, for endeavouring to perform our Duty according to the Commandments and Injunctions thou hast given us: And therefore, as we have none to fly unto for Succour but to thy Majesty, we beseech thee, for this Innocence of ours, to take us into thy Protection, and mercifully defend us from the prosperous and devouring Hand of our Enemies. Destroy not all them who are guilty, O Lord, lest thy Justice should extend to the consuming and rooting out an unhappy and rebellious Nation, which hath been zealous to thy Worship, and solicitous for thy Service; but scatter them by thy Power, and bring them down; divide the mischievous Rulers amongst themselves, and make them Ministers of each others Confusion; make their lying and slandering so evident and manifest,

6 R

that

* Wisd. i. 9.

that the deluded People may discern how miserably they have been seduced, and thereupon heartily repent the Sins and Mischiefs they have been made accessory to, and be honestly united to the utmost of their Power to make up the Breaches they have made; that we being made all of one Heart towards thee, may be of one Affection to thy Viceroy the King, and of one Spirit in Charity to one another, and join in the praising thy great Name for so glorious a Deliverance. Amen.

P S A L M LX.

WE have heard of a People, whose Custom it was to celebrate great Mournings and Lamentations at the Birth of their Children, and as great Feasts and Triumphs at their Expiration, when they departed this Life; they wisely looked upon the one as an Entrance into a World of Trouble, Vexation, and Misery, insomuch, as let the Condition of the Orphan be never so high, and his Hopes and Expectation never so glorious, he would have Cause enough to be weary of his Life, and wish a Thousand Times it were at an end: Whereas, they considered Death as a Determination of all Trouble, and Unquietness, and Want, and a sure Harbinger of Rest, Peace and Repose. It will not be unreasonable for us to imitate in some Degree that Method and Order in the Vicissitudes and Changes of our Life; and in our Prosperity, which in spite of all our Care and Discretion, will be the Birth of many Follies and Transgressions, to retain a Sadness and a Wariness that may prepare us for the next Alteration; and in that Alteration, in our Adversity, (which will likewise be the Death of some Vices or Excesses, and for want of a due and sober Expectation of it, usually makes too great an Impression upon our Minds and Faculties) to keep our Spirits up in Alacrity and Vigor, with an honest and pious Assurance that the worst is already past, and that we shall shortly have a full End of our Sufferings. The Truth is, our good Fortune and Prosperity is rarely so innocent, but that by our Pride or our Folly, by our thinking too well of our selves, or by undervaluing others, by our Excesses and Waste upon our own Pleasures and Appetite, or by our Reservation and Narrowness in the Assistance or Relief of other Men; by our casual committing Errors out of Weakness, and with no ill Intention, and by our justifying and improving those Errors afterwards, out of Wilfulness and Disdain to be reproved, and to retract any thing we have done; we do by degrees contract such a Guilt, as may well beget a Fear in us that some Punishment and Judgment will assuredly overtake us, to humble and reform the Haughtiness of our Nature and Understanding. On the other Side, our Adversity is seldom so wretched and ineffectual, but that we grow the wiser and the better by it: We learn by suffering much to suffer well, and thereby we come to have Patience, by the Contempt and Neglect we meet with amongst those, who unbribed by Obligations or Dependence converse with us; we find how unvaluable we are in our selves, without the Advantages of our Estates, Offices, and such Qualifications, and thereby we come to have Modesty and Humility; our Wants and Necessities will teach us Abstinence and Temperance, and how little Excesses human Nature requires; and the Impu-

rations and Calumnies from those who love us not, and our own wise revolving upon those uncharitable Memorials, will bring all our Oversight and Sins, and the ill Effects and Consequences of them, into our Memory; and from thence we shall practise a true and a hearty Sorrow and Repentance for what we have done weakly and wickedly, and make up such Resolutions and Purposes of doing well and wisely hereafter, that we shall compound a new Nature. And from this Information and Reformation, we cannot be without some Assurance of God's Favour and good Purposes to carry us through this Storm that threatens us, and to dispel and disperse these Clouds that overshadow us: And therefore, they will not give a good Account of their Adversity, (and it may be God observes more our Carriage then, than in any other Condition of our Life) who are so cast down and dejected with their Crosses and their Losses, with the Power and Success of their Enemies, and with the ill Success of their own Undertakings, as to conclude their Condition to be desperate, and that they shall never be delivered, because they are not delivered so soon as they desire to be.

If God be for a time so displeased with a Prince and People, that he seems no better than to cast them off, exposes their Fortunes, their Lives, and their good Names to their covetous, cruel, and calumniating Enemies, scatters them abroad in Prisons and in Banishment, that they cannot come to comfort one another, nor find any who desires to comfort them: If their own Country be covered and overspread with Profaneness and Rebellion, which hath defaced and broken down all Order and Government both in Church and State, and exercised all kind of Tyranny with that License, that the Land even shakes and trembles at the horrible Instances of its own Wickedness and Impiety, and all other Lands tremble with the Fear of their Power, and Horror of their Example: If this deep Draught of Affliction hath wrought upon them to Amazement and Astonishment, that they know not how to apply themselves to any Expedient from whence they can soberly promise themselves Redress, or any issue out of their Calamities; they are not yet to despair: God hath given a Token and a Banner to those who fear and trust him, that may raise a Confidence both in Prince and People, that he will yet turn his Loving-kindness towards them. There cannot be a more pregnant Token of his gracious Purposes towards them, than that he hath hitherto preserved them, and that he hath frequently vouchsafed Deliverances to those who were much nearer lost than they are: He suffered his own chosen People not to be only expelled and banished out of their own Country, but to be led Captives into a strange Land; and yet he brought them Home again with Honour and Glory, and extended their Dominions over those who had triumphed over and oppressed them. If we can patiently wait under that Banner of Faith till his Hour comes, till the crying Sins of our Enemies awaken him to Justice, and our lamentable Sufferings, hearty Repentance, and solemn Resolutions of future Uprightness and Integrity, incline him to Compassion; he will deliver his beloved, his chosen Servant the King, and all those who have faithfully loved and served him for Conscience and Duty Sake; he will not only restore him to his own Territories, and invest him in the entire and peaceable Government of his own People, that he may establish Justice in the several Cities and Corners thereof; but will make him a Terror to those Neighbour Nations who contrived and contributed to his Troubles and Cruelty, refused to succour and
assist

assist him in his Distresses, and will lead and prosper his Armies against their strong Cities, till they are reduced to his Obedience: He who for a Time had cast him off, and did not go out with his Armies, but suffered them to be beaten and defeated in great Multitudes by a handful of proud Enemies, will now conduct his Forces, and give them Victory in whatsoever they go about, and therefore conduct them because he had once cast them off, and thereby humbled them, to renounce all their own Vanities and foolish Dependance upon their own Strength and Courage; that they may discern and confess, and all the World acknowledge, that not only all Success, and the Issue of War and Battels, but the Well-ordering and Designing them, and the Valour and Prowess expressed and manifested in them, proceeds only from, and depends upon his Direction and Blessing, without which all our Dexterity and Contrivance, all our vain Boast and Presumption of Courage and Boldness, ends in pure Fear, Distraction and Consternation.

Almighty God, we acknowledge and confess that thou hast been most justly displeased with us, and incensed against us, for our Folly and Sottishness in those Times when thou didst vouchsafe to be present with us, and to bless and prosper all that we went about; for our Pride and Insolence in the Time of our Power, when we rather considered what Mischief we were able to do, than what Good we were bound to do; and for our Luxury and License in the Time of our Plenty, when we looked only upon satisfying our own inordinate Affections and Appetite, not relieving the Wants and Distresses of others; and if we did affect the succouring and assisting any who were in Necessity and Affliction, it was rather out of Vanity, and Design to magnify our selves, and to draw them to a Dependance upon us and our Humours, without a true Love of Charity, and wise examining the Innocence and Virtue of those who are the most proper Objects of it. And therefore thou hast withdrawn thy Favour from us, and cast us out of thy Protection; suffered us to be dispossessed of our Fortunes, divorced from our Wives, and banished from our Countries, and in our Banishment, made other Nations more afraid to displease our Enemies, than inclined to pity and relieve our Misfortunes: Thou hast suffered our whole Nation to be corrupted with a Liking and Love of Treason, Rebellion and Sacrilege, or with a Dread and Fear of those who are so; insomuch, as though the Land trembles, and is shaken with the Weight of its own Murder, and Paricide, and Profaneness, all Men are in that deep Astonishment, as they know not which way to remove the Burthen that oppresses them. Therefore, we beseech thee, and because of all this Misery and Calamity undergone by us, turn thy loving Countenance towards us, and repeat those Mercies and Deliverances to us, which thou hast heretofore vouchsafed to them whom thou meant'st not utterly to root out: Save the King from their Hands who would destroy him, and place him upon his Throne again; subdue his People to an entire and absolute Obedience to him; and instruct him to govern them with that Justice and Mercy, that they may acknowledge his Restoration to be the greatest worldly Blessing thou couldst dispense to a Nation whom thou meanest to make happy; and make him an Instrument of reforming the Manners and Customs of other Nations.

Nations; and reducing them to a true Love and Obedience to thee, and Acknowledgment of thy great Power and Glory. Amen.

P S A L M LXI.

WE may be in great Perplexities and Distresses, and yet have Friends enough both willing and able to relieve and support us: They may be at such a Distance, that they cannot hear us when we call, nor easily hear from us; so that we may be past a Capacity of receiving help, before they can be capable of sending it. It is therefore a great Comfort in all our Afflictions and Calamities, that he who is best able to succour and deliver us, is always within the Reach of our Cry; and though he sits above the Cherubims, hears perfectly every Groan and Prayer we pour out to him from the lowest Dungeon of our Prison. Let our Enemies carry us as far as they please into Banishment, or cast us as deep as they please into Bondage, he will both see and hear us, if we pray to him with that Fervor and Devotion we ought to do, and raise our Spirits so high, that we may likewise have a Prospect of, and see him; and he will interpose some Shelter and Protection between us and the Malice and Power of our Enemies, either by abating their Rage towards us, or by raising some Defence for us against it, that we may with some ease abide the Time, till he thinks fit to make our Deliverance perfect and compleat: And as we need little Encouragement to go to those whom we have always found kind and favourable to us, and who have at other Times freed us from the same Streights we now labour in; that Physician will be sure to hear from us, when we feel any Pain, or but suspect any Disease in which he hath given us Ease formerly, and of which he hath once before cured us: So it will be no hard matter always to call to mind some Blessing God hath vouchsafed to us; some extraordinary unexpected Supply, when our Wants were most pressing upon us; or some wonderful Escape and Preservation, when Danger was ready to swallow us up; that may persuade us to hope for the same Goodness from him, and to believe that he will do the same for us now, which he hath used to do. Indeed, though we are readiest, most inclined to pray to him when we are in great Want and Necessity, yet we have never more need to pray to him than in that Instant when he hath granted us the Effect of our Prayers: So far we are from being capable of such a Supply, as may bring us out of need of asking more of him. If he sends us Victory over our Enemies, and defeats all their Imaginations and Devices against us, we have more need of his Assistance against our own Affections and Passions, than we had against those Enemies; that we be not transported so much with the happy and blessed Change of our Condition, to forget to whom we owe that Change, and to forget all the Promises we made before that Change: Nay, when he hath heard our Vows, and hath given us the Heritage of those that fear his Name, that is, given us his Promise of Heaven itself, we have more need of his Favour than we had before, by how much we have more to lose than we had before, and are sure to forfeit that Heritage by failing on our Part, if he does not as well help us to pay the Purchase, as he hath made the Bargain. In a word, our Wants are so much more innocent than our Havings, that the more he gives us the more he will have to

forgive us; and therefore, let our Prayers be more fervent and importunate when we receive a signal Blessing from him, than when we suffer under a grievous Judgment by him; and let every new Bounty, every Condescension of his to our Petitions, be attended with devout Praises, and Acknowledgments, and Thanksgivings, and beget new Prayers in us for the Assistance and Direction of his Holy Spirit, that we may be the more worthy of his Favour by receiving it, and that we may daily perform our Vows.

GRacious Father, we do most humbly acknowledge that thou hast been a Shelter to us in all our Distresses, and a Refuge to us in all our Dangers, and that less than the Shadow of thy own Wings could not hitherto have preserved us from the Rage and Tyranny of our Enemies; and therefore, we beseech thee, into what part of the World soever we shall be cast by their cruel Persecution, that thou wilt still hear the Voice of our Prayer, and continue thy Loving-kindness and Mercy to us, and fix all our Hopes and Confidence upon thee, who art a Rock that never fails us. Bless the King, and continue his Life beyond that time in which thou hast determined to exercise him with Afflictions, that he may enjoy that Honour and Glory in this World, which his high Birth promised to him; infuse into, and root in him such a Love of Mercy and Truth, that may render him loved and revered by his Subjects; and make them repent the Wrong they have done to him; and make him so zealous of thy Honour, Glory and Service, that after he hath finished a long and happy old Age, to repair the sad Calamities of his Youth, he may abide before thee for ever, and enjoy thy blessed Presence in thy heavenly Kingdom, for evermore. Amen.

P S A L M LXII.

WE cannot exercise our Thoughts too much in any Considerations which may produce a true Habit of Patience in us, of which we are sure always to have need; and so much the more, as very few Men think they want it, but rather that they are too apt, too well contented to suffer, and that they suffer by their Patience. And it is no wonder, since Patience is nothing else but an entire Resignation of our selves to God's Disposal, and a full Trust and Confidence in him, that we are not willing to be thought to be without it; for there is no Man amongst us, who professes not absolutely to trust and rely on him; and therefore it is to be hoped, that all our unquietness, and impatience, and murmuring in our Afflictions and Distresses, proceeds rather from our not well knowing, or not enough considering what it is so absolutely to repose that entire Trust in him, out of which Patience is naturally constituted, than that we are without a very hearty Dependence upon, and Submission to his good Will and Pleasure: For it is not at all strange and unusual, that Men are possessed of a Jewel or Sovereign Medicine, the Value whereof they are ignorant of, and know as little how to apply or use it: And it is the proper Business and End of pious and devout Contemplation, to manage and improve those Infusions and Impressions which God hath graciously vouchsafed to put and make in us, and to

reduce our general and unpolished Speculations and Conceptions into a prompt and ready Practice; it being to no purpose to think how best to employ that which we have not, and know nothing of; and there being no Opinion that is a vital Part of the Christian Religion, from which the necessary Practice of some Christian Duty is not deduced, and which Duty would not be practised, but as the Effect of that Opinion. So that it will be worth a very sad Debate with our selves, how to inform and improve that natural Promptitude that is in us to trust God Almighty (for there is no doubt, it is as natural to know that we must trust in, and depend upon God, as to know that there is a God) in such a Manner, and to such a Degree, as from that Trust may result that Patience which is the Fruit of it, and which will give us Ease and Repose in the Depth of our Misery and Persecution.

It will be then very requisite, first, clearly to understand how unworthy and incapable all other things are of Trust, before we can trust in him as we ought; we cannot have a true Value of him, if we do not undervalue every thing else; and though it be no good Courtship on Earth therefore to resort to a Friend, because we know not what else to do, and have tried all other ways, yet it is not ill taken in Heaven; and God likes the Reason well, that we come to him because no body else can help us, and if any body else could help us, he would not expect that we should repose our whole Trust in him, for then his Power were not so absolute. But we have made very ill use of our Experience in this World, if we are not abundantly satisfied that there is nothing in it fit to rely on, fit to depend upon, even for the Conveniencies and Pleasures of this World: If we have had any Opinion of popular Affections, of the Inclinations and good Wishes of the Multitude, we have seen how light, fickle and inconstant they are, and that they are ready to tear him in pieces to-Morrow, whom Yesterday they revered and adored. If we have been apt to presume a Security in the Countenance and Protection of great Men, the Kings and Princes of the Earth, we have been taught by woful Experience, that all that Power and Greatness is a meer Imagination and Fiction, and by the least Combination and Treachery of their own Vassals dissolved. We might have set our Heart upon Wealth and Riches, and promised our selves notable Advantages from that Possession, had we not pregnant Evidence that they are no longer ours than the Standers-by are content that we shall enjoy them; and when they resolve to take them from us, we have not wherewithal to cloath our Nakedness, or to satisfy our Hunger. So that without resorting to any other Considerations than what must always attend upon the Balance of our own natural Reason, we cannot but conclude, that to repose any Confidence in those vain, and weak, and ridiculous Supporters, is to be accessory and contributory to our own Destruction; and that he can only be worthy of our Trust, who never deceived any body that trusted in him, and is able, and willing, and solicitous to succour and preserve us, if we frankly commit our selves to his Conduct and Protection.

From this Disquisition we shall make our Trust in him worthy of his Acceptance, by our constant adhering to him, and declining any other Dependance; and when both our outward and our inward Enemies find that we are fixed and settled upon that Rock, they will give over all their Hope of prevailing against us; those who publicly pursue us, and imagine that by taking away our Estates and Offices from us, and banish-

ing

ing us from our Country, we will be drawn in the End to comply with their unjust and impious Proceedings; and our inward Enemies, our corrupt Affections and Passions, which would work upon our Hopes and our Fears, and persuade us that we have done enough, and suffered enough for Conscience Sake, and that since it is not in our Power to preserve the Rights of others, we are to use our utmost Diligence to preserve our selves, and what of Right belongs to us, at the best Rate we can, will all give over farther assaulting us, when they discern we cannot be moved, and that neither the Threats or Promises of the one, nor the specious Artifices of the other, can remove us from that Rock, and cast us down from that Excellency, which does attend upon our Confidence in him. But then our Trust in him must be entire, such a Trust, as the best and most powerful Friend is worthy of; we must not trust him with our Dangers, and hope he will deliver us from them; and with our Diseases, and presume he will cure them; and conceal from him our Weakness and Wickedness, which threw us into those Dangers, and our Riots and Excesses, which brought us into those Diseases: He knows well we undervalue him according to our own Rules, if we pretend to trust him, and do not pour out our Hearts before him.

If we did consider that the Breast is much worse able to bear than the Back, as without doubt it is, we should be as solicitous to give ourselves Ease by disburthening that, as we are to lay down any Weight that is too heavy for our Shoulders: Nay, it is very strange that we do find Relief and Comfort in communicating the Wrongs and Injuries we receive, or it may be but apprehend, to the Friends we trust, when the Rage have swoln, and the Smart of them have even festered our own Bosoms, and thereby find the way to Reparation and Redress much more easy and facilitated, and a great Degree, in the mean time, of Repose from the very Vent and Communication; and yet we cannot endure to try the same Expedient to lessen and mitigate the Pain of our Sins, which are much more vexatious and tormenting in our Bosoms than the other can be, but use all Devices of Hypocrisy and Impudence to conceal them, till their Smart and their Shame are published together. God will not believe we trust in him, if we use him so unlike a Friend, as to have any Reservation towards him; it will much concern us to pour out our whole Hearts before him, every Thought and Device that lurks in any Corner of our Hearts, to expose every Sin and corrupt Inclination to his view in our Prayers, that he may give us Antidotes against their Poison, and to spread before him in pious and formed Meditations, the several Temptations which most prevail upon our Nature, and the Approaches they make upon us under fair and specious Pretences. And by taking this impartial Prospect of them our selves, though it may be we may not be immediately freed of them, and that those Guests which have been so welcome to us, and have so long taken up Lodgings in our Hearts, may not on the sudden easily and absolutely be shut out from thence, yet we shall surely find their Vigor and Importunity much abated. If we pour out before him the envious, and the proud, and the ambitious Thoughts of our Hearts, and inform him how they steal into us under the Shape of just and honest Purposes, and of reforming what is amiss, and of punishing Persons guilty of Injustice and Oppression, and of procuring better Ministers to be employed in their Rooms, and beseech him to watch us with his divine Providence, that we be not transported under the Notion of publick Zeal, with any private and uncharitable Designs

of our own; it may be, we shall not by this Representation utterly banish all vain Opinions of our own Merit and Desert, and all inordinate Inclinations to Honour and Preferment; yet we shall keep our selves in such a Temper, that we shall not rebel or disturb the publick Peace to compass our Desires: If we present a true Account to him of the Unruliness and Violence of our Passions, and therein faithfully set down the Madness and Indecency of our Choler and our Rage, how it divests us of our Reason and Understanding, and from foolish and unfit Actions, makes us break out into unjust and unlawful Actions, and so forfeit both our Reputation and our Innocence; it may be, we shall not be hereby so fortified, as to retain a full Temper in and against all Provocations, a rash and a hasty Word may still break from us, but it will hardly be attended and continued with Acts of Injustice, or Thoughts of Revenge: If we lament before him the foul and polluted Thoughts of our Hearts, the solemn and deliberate Contrivances of our Lust, and unchaste Purposes and Attempts; and in that Exercise of our Religion, revolve the Filthiness of our Sin, and how we thereby defile and lose the precious and beautiful Image of our Creator and Redeemer, and turn our selves into Beasts, and shall be sure to undergo the Punishments and Judgments pronounced upon such beastly Offenders; possibly we may not utterly and for ever suppress the unlawful Warmth and Heat of our Blood, and thoroughly quench and extinguish all the Glowings of the Fire of loose and voluptuous Desires, yet we shall remain so full of pious Fear and Modesty, that we shall be ashamed to fan that Fire into a Flame, by cherishing those wicked Desires, and submitting our selves to be carried into an Action of Uncleaness, to the just Provocation of God's Anger and Wrath upon us: In a word, if we do frequently in this manner purge and pour out our Hearts before him, we shall by degrees make them as clean as he expects or desires to find them; at worst, if the Malignity of our Constitution shall, in despite of this spiritual Excitation, still incline to, and produce in us the same Affections and Passions, (which is hardly possible,) yet, as by often resting and taking off the Load that is on our Shoulders, we find Ease, and recover Strength to carry it to the End of our Journey; so by this temporary resting our selves in a devout Examination and Confession of our Sins, and taking off the present Weight and Sharpness, by the View and Prospect of their Deformity, we shall be the more fresh and vigorous to contend and struggle with them; and they shall not by lurking undiscerned in us, so incorporate into our Nature, as to exact a servile Obedience to their Dominion.

It is very true, there is no Corner or Angle in our Heart so dark, that God's Eye cannot pierce into it, and discern what is lodged hid there; nor can any Confession, how ingenuous and particular soever, make our very Thoughts more apparent to him than they are without it: And therefore, it may be thought impertinent, or not very necessary, to perplex and make our selves melancholick and out of Countenance, with the marshalling and deciphering all our Infirmitics and Faults, with the Progress they make in us, for his Information, who knows all better than we our selves do; and that as we trust him with general Petitions to supply us with what we want, because he knows better than we what is fit for us, so general Acknowledgments that we are grievous Sinners, and general Prayers that he will infuse such a Measure of his Grace into our Hearts, as may make us acceptable to him, will be sufficient, be-

cause he knows best how to prevent our committing such Sins as he will not pardon, and how to pardon and forgive the rest. But sure this Argumentation cannot interrupt our practice of this necessary Christian Duty; since by the Rules of our own Custom, we are more at Liberty to punish with Severity those Crimes which are committed against us, and discovered by our own Diligence and Enquiry, than those which the Trespasser out of Conscience and Ingenuity, and with profession of Sorrow and Recognition himself acknowledges, and voluntarily confesses to us, which we are in a manner obliged in Charity and Generosity, and even in Justice to remit and pardon, though they would have come to our Knowledge without his Confession: So the Sins which we put God to find out in us by his Omnipotence and Omniscience, he will punish as a Judge with Severity and Rigor; whereas those we accuse our selves of with Remorse and Penitence, he looks upon with Clemency, as an Advocate and a Party trusted by us, before whom we pour out our Hearts, and so ought not to suffer for what we commit to him in sincere Confession and Repentance.

Merciful God, who art our Rock, and our Salvation, all our Hope, and all our Confidence; and because thou art so, we are not moved by the Threats and Success of our Enemies, to swerve from those Rules and Commands which thou hast enjoined us to observe: We wait only on thee for our Deliverance, and confess all other Dependance but on thee, though it should be on the Princes of the Earth, to be mere Folly and Vanity; and that when thou withdrawest thy Protection and Assistance from them, all their Power and Greatness is empty Air and Smoke, which the Wind scattereth abroad; vouchsafe to take us into thy merciful Favour, and defend us from those cruel Enemies who lie in wait to destroy us; and be thou our Refuge and Support, because we do sincerely trust in thee at all times, and pour out our Hearts before thee, therefore be thou merciful unto us. Amen.

P S A L M LXIII.

WHatever Impression our Affliction makes upon our Spirits, to what Distresses and Want soever it reduces us, it must never abate our Alacrity towards God's Service, never produce a want of Devotion in us; if it do, it is a pregnant and infallible Symptom that our Disease is desperate and incurable. Adversity is the natural Parent of Reformation in Understanding and Affections, it refines and purifies Mens Natures, and begets a Warmth and Light of Piety and Religion, out of those Embers which lay scattered, and almost extinguished in Pleasures and Incogitancy: And therefore if it works a contrary Effect in us, and makes us slower in our Addresses, and duller in our Confidence of God's Favour and Mercy towards us, we may well conclude, that the Venom and Malignity of our Constitution is superior to the Strength and Virtue of any Antidote. If we are banished from our pleasant and fruitful Country, into a barren and uninhabited Land; or, which makes it more a Desert, a Place inhabited by a proud and uncharitable People, who take no Compassion of our Miseries, and where we cannot

cannot enjoy the Liberty and Exercise of our Prayers in that Manner and with that Solemnity as we know is most acceptable to him, and to which we have been accustomed; this, if the Fault be not in us, will not at all hinder our Approach to him; we shall find him still as propitious to us, as ready to succour us, and to manifest his Power and his Glory to us, as if we sought him in his Sanctuary, in the Place where he most resides, and where he most desires to be worshipped. If our Zeal and Appetite be the same, and our Soul really thirsts after him, we can hallow and consecrate any Wilderness into a Temple, and the faithful Sacrifice we shall offer to him upon the Altar of our penitent Hearts, will be still most acceptable. So that they who out of the Melancholick of being separated from the Congregations they have used to frequent, and an Opinion that the Exercise of their Religion within themselves in their Banishment is an Act of more Solitariness than Religion will admit of, betake themselves to another Communion, without considering the unreasonable and untrue Conclusion it obliges them to, or by disquieting themselves too much upon the first, consider and weigh the second less, are not of *David's* Mind, who when he was driven from the Temple, preserved his Devotion the same, and found it as effectual in the Desert. If we shall follow his Example, and lift up our Hands to his Name, and not lift them up to any other Name or Power, by any vile Submissions, or servile Applications and Compliances against our Honour and Conscience, and shall Day and Night remember his Commandments, and meditate on the Observance of them, we shall receive his Reward; and shall in the lowest Condition of Imprisonment or Banishment that our unjust Enemies can cast us into, find our Spirits and Souls much more comforted with the Conscience of pleasing him, than our Bodies could be with all the Marrow and Nourishment that could be administered to us, and God will preserve us as he did them; and after he hath hid us for a Time under his own Wings, relieved and succoured us in Foreign Countries, from the Rage and Fury of our prevailing Enemies, he will not only destroy those who impiously persecute us, deliver them into the Power of those who are as cruel and more cunning than themselves, but he will do it with that killing Circumstance, that they shall first see all their own Stratagems reversed, and brought to nothing. The envious and malicious Person, who hath more pleased himself with seeing us poor and miserable, than with the Possession he hath gotten of our Offices and Estates, shall not only be dispossessed of what he hath unjustly usurped, but shall see us restored to our own Rights: And the Rebel whose Wickedness and Ambition more delighted in the Expulsion of a Royal Family, than in the Advantage himself reaped thereby, shall not only see his own Authority dissolved, and his Treason punished, but shall behold that King re-established upon his Throne in Glory, against whom he rebelled; which is the most insupportable Judgment God himself can lay upon him in this World.

Gracious Father, into what Condition soever of Want and Necessity thou shalt suffer us to be brought, and into what part of the World soever thou shalt suffer us to be carried or driven, we shall still continue the same Faith and Hope in thee, and have the same Prospect of thy Power, and the same Delight in offering our Prayers and our Praises to thee, as if we had the Liberty to serve thee in Churches dedicated to thy Service, and in the Congregation thou

thou art most pleased with: Accept that Devotion we are able to pay thee, and make us by our humble and pious Deportment in our Adversity worthy of thy Deliverance, and then dissolve that wicked Combination that is entred into against us, and let the Conspirators behold the King by thy Blessing restored to his Throne, and all that are true to him to their own Country and Possessions. Amen.

P S A L M LXIV.

O Thou mighty God above all, hear the voice of the forlorn, and deliver us out of the hands of the mischievous, and deliver me out of my fear, was the Conclusion of the Prayer which Queen * Esther made, when she was to expose her Life to preserve her Nation. We have made a great Progress towards our Deliverance, when we are freed from the Agony and Pain, and Terror of our Fear, which attends all our Dangers, and makes us feel our Enemies Power at a Distance; when they are as much vexed because they cannot hurt us, and so divest us of that Reason by which we should provide for our Security. As no question the Dread and Apprehension of what our Enemies will do, if they shall prevail, does very often work upon us to act, and to consent to some Things, which no present Execution of the severest Judgment could draw us to do: So that we have great Reason, when we see any Misery or Affliction approach to us, to beseech the Divine Providence to give us that Fearlessness of Mind, that we may only fear his Displeasure; and this Christian Courage, let our natural Constitution be what it will, can proceed only from his Goodness to us; he only can shelter and protect us from the close and dark Conspiracies, and the open and publick Violence and Oppression of our Enemies, who at the same Time they pursue us with their active Power, and drive us from our Estates, and out of our Country, are as solicitous by their Calumnies and Slanders, to raise Prejudice against us in all Places where we may hope for Quiet and Repose, lest our Patience and Virtue in Suffering, may gain Credit with just and equal Persons, to make them odious for their Uncharitableness and Cruelty, who are never troubled at the committing, but at the Discovery of the Ill they do; and think they shall never be punished for that Wickedness, the doing whereof they contrive with so much Cunning and Secresy, that no Man observes them; and the Party whom they hate is hurt or destroyed before he suspects who are his Enemies. But God, who needs no Evidence or Witnesses, and hath more invisible Arrows in his Quiver to shoot amongst them, than they can provide out of the Forge of all their Wit and Malice, discerns all their Counsels, and does not only render the Poison of their Lips, all their Railings, and virulent Suggestions against our Reputations ineffectual and uncredited, but likewise abates the Edges, and dulls the Points of their very Swords; loosens their Strength and Vigor, that their very Strokes are no more felt, than if they proceeded from the Hands of Children. We do not feel the loss of our Estates, find no Inconveniencies by the change of Air, and enjoy the same Health Abroad, which we could but hope to do in our

* Esther xiv. 19.

own Country; and when he hath thus made all their Words and their Blows soft, and of no Force against those for whose Destruction only they wish they should be as Thunder and Lightning, he gives a new Spirit and Power into them, and redoubles the Force and Malignity of either to be exercised against themselves, and upon one another: They mutually revile and reproach each other, and are all credited and believed; and every Man is taken for a competent Witness to accuse, and a competent Judge to condemn one another: And when all their impotent Rage and Malice against us, is contracted into a stout and a vigorous Animosity against their own Friends and Supporters, they shall not want Strength and Power for the Exercise of their Fury, but shall bravely sacrifice one another to the Justice of the Laws which they have eluded, and to the Peace of their Country which they have oppressed; whilst they who adhered to them, confounded with the Spectacle, fly from them, and leave them unpitied to their own Fate; and they whom they contemned and insulted over, stand exalted with the Manner and the Glory of their Deliverance, and use all their Industry and Diligence from thence to magnify God's Goodness, and to reduce all Men to a due Obedience to his Name.

O Lord God, hear our Prayers, and let not the Threats and Power, and Success of our Enemies, infuse any unworthy Fear into us, whereby we may become less resolute in the performance of our Duty to thee, and the Observation of the Dictates of a good Conscience; but give us Courage not only to lose our Fortunes, but our Lives also, rather than to commit a wilful Breach of the Commands thou hast enjoined us to observe. Defend us from all the secret Devices of their Fraud and Cunning, and from all the open Assaults and Attempts of their Force and Violence, and infuse into them a Spirit of Disunion and Distrust of each other, that they may instead of pursuing and persecuting us, fall out amongst themselves, till they are weakened and destroyed; and let us, and all who behold us, wisely consider that it is thy Doing for the bringing those to Confusion who neglect and despise thy Precepts, and upholding those who faithfully trust and depend upon thy Mercy and Protection. Amen.

P S A L M LXV.

THough we have all Guilt enough of our own to entitle us to any Misery that can befall us, and need look no farther than our own Sins to examine the Cause and Ground of our Calamities, yet it may often fall out, that we may suffer for the Faults of others, without any Transgression of ours in those Particulars for which we suffer: The Iniquities of others may prevail against us, when our own Crimes have not at all contributed to the Judgments we undergo. So we may well believe, that when the Children of *Israel* suffered the heaviest Punishments the Wrath of God was pleased to lay upon that People, there were very many pious and religious Persons who bore their Share of those Calamities, and yet heartily abhorred the Sins for which those Calamities were poured out upon them; and if they have been universally guilty when they were carried into Captivity, (which was the hea-

viest Sentence upon them, and will always be the heaviest that can be inflicted upon any Kingdom in this World;) we are sure there were many born afterwards, and lived long under the Captivity, who did really suffer for the Iniquity of their Fathers, without Imputation of their own Offences as the Cause of what they suffered. There was never Nation so unanimously wicked, as to have no Persons innocent of those heinous and crying Sins, which being generally practised, have been called National; and yet those innocent Persons have been joint Sufferers with the rest, nor is it possible to be otherwise. If a proud, forward, and perverse People provoke the Divine Justice to Anger, and to suffer them to be led away by a Spirit of Sedition and Rebellion, it is not possible enough to punish them with Confusion and Desolation, but for a Time, by withdrawing his Hand of Assistance and Protection from the King of that People, how virtuous and worthy soever; for whilst he remains in Happiness and Glory, the Land cannot be miserable, which it is necessary it should be for their Humiliation. And so his Judgment is very often sharpest for a Time, against those with whom he is least angry; and indeed only out of his Anger against those whom he permits to prosper in their Wickedness; it being a terrible Instance of his Wrath, not to cross or interrupt ill Men in the Progress and Pursuit of their Villany: But then there is a very great difference in the Suffering, between those who are really the Cause of the Calamity, and those over whom those Calamities are spread, and by which they are compassed in; and though they all bear the Misery, they are not all equally miserable; God gives the innocent Man Patience, and Courage, and Constancy, which makes his Burthen light, and in a short Time frees him from the Punishment that the Guilt of other Men brought upon him. If he be in Prison or Banishment he hears his Prayers, and in the end sets him at Liberty, and brings him back to his own Country to praise his Name, and to pay his Vows to him; and sets such wonderful Marks of his Deliverance and Favour on him, that other Men are converted from their Sins, by observing those Instances of his Goodness. He stops and restrains those Inundations of War, Pestilence and Famine, which his Displeasure had suffered to break in like a Sea, and to overflow the Land, and reduces again the froward and unruly Multitude to an Awe and Reverence of Government, and of their Governors; he reverses all his own Judgments, and wipes out the Marks of his Anger and Fury, refreshes the barren Earth with Showers, and makes the Land fruitful again by the Sunshine of his Bounty, and by the Blessing of Peace restores Plenty of whatsoever is necessary for the Use of Man, to that Kingdom that was depopulated, and even made a Wilderness by his former Judgments.

*G*Racious Father, who hast for our Sins suffered the Iniquities of others to prevail against us, even to the profaning of thy own Name, and to the captivating our poor Country under the Tyranny of Usurpers, and cruel and bloody Men; and hast by those terrible Tokens of thy Displeasure and Judgment upon us, made those who dwell in the uttermost Parts of the World, afraid of what thou mayst determine of all Princes and Monarchs. We beseech thee to still the Noise of this Sea of Confusion; restrain those Waves of Rebellion which have overflowed the Land, and suppress and reclaim that tumultuous People, who are the miserable Authors of their

their own Destruction. Take Compassion upon us, and upon that miserable Kingdom; visit it again with thy Loving-kindness, and restore it to its ancient Peace and Plenty, that it may rejoice in thee, and that we may praise thee, and perform the Vows we have made unto thee in that our Native Soil; and that because thou hast heard our Prayers, all Flesh may come unto thee; and by that Example of thy Goodness, all Nations may be converted to the Fear of thee. Amen.

P S A L M LXVI.

O Praise the Lord, for it is a good thing to sing praises unto our God; yea, a joyful and a pleasant thing it is to be thankful*, says this kingly Prophet in another Psalm, when he would celebrate the particular Mercies and Favours of Almighty God in the highest, and most exalted Strain of Devotion. The Truth is, if a virtuous and pious Life were to receive no Reward and Advantage in the next World, it were to be chosen for the very Pleasure and Comfort it administers to us in this; there being no Delight equal to that which a Man really feels from doing well; and consequently no Joy worthy to be named with that which possesses a Man, when he is contemplating the Greatness and the Glory of his Creator, and making due Acknowledgments of the Blessings and Deliverances he hath received from his Divine Providence and Mercy. Indeed there is nothing more acceptable to God, than such a Joy and Jollity, such Chearfulness and Alacrity; and they who would exclude it from the Life and Profession of Christianity, and introduce a sowe and severe Moroseness into Practice, as if our Thoughts ought to be so entirely engrossed and disposed to the Contemplation of Heaven, that we ought to have no Taste and Relish in the Matters of this Life, shut out a Sacrifice that he is very well pleased with: We are taught to look upon Heaven it self as a place of incomprehensible Joy and Bliss, and we are allowed much Mirth and Pleasure in our way thither. What would that Prince think of that Man, of whom he should make Choice to favour and oblige with Honours and Offices, and should still find with downcast Eyes, and Shews of Sadness and Melancholy, without any chearful Acknowledgment of his Graces, or any Signs that he thought himself happy, or his Condition good? Doubtless he would believe him to be of a very ingrateful Nature, or at least of a Nature not worthy or not capable of such Obligations. And what must God think of us, if when he pours down his Blessings upon us, in preserving us from the Fury, though not from the Oppression of our Enemies, in rescuing our Lives from their Malice, though he gives them Leave to prey upon our Fortunes; and (which is his greatest Blessing) in giving us Grace to abstain from those enormous Crimes which must be attended by his Judgments, to perform our Duties to Men with reasonable Perfection, and to endeavour with our utmost Power to please him, he finds us without any Chearfulness or Joy at all, perplexed at what we have lost, not comforted with what we have left, enraged and transported at the Guilt and Wickedness of our Enemies, not refreshed and delighted at all with our own Innocence and Integrity?

With.

* Psal. cxlviii. 1.

Without question, our Humiliation, and Mourning, and Fasting, and deepest Agonies of Sorrow, are not more acceptable to God Almighty, out of the Sense of our Sins, and when his Hand is most heavy upon us in his Judgments, than that Alacrity and Chearfulness is which flows from any honest Action we have done, or any good Purpose we have faithfully resolved, or than our fullest and loudest Joy, produced out of our pious Sense of some signal Blessing he hath conferred on us: He hath his Festivals and Holidays, and would not be served at all times with the same Spirit and Tune, and Measure of Devotion. When he vouchsafes in an extraordinary Manner to exercise his Power to the Terror and Confusion of our Enemies, at a Time when they think themselves superior to all Opposition, and even possessed of their long purposed Conquests, or in a wonderful Deliverance of us, when he snatches us out of the very Jaws of our devouring Adversaries; and when out of their Pride and Insolence, having reduced us to extreme Wants and Famine, they even condemn what God himself can do for us, and our own Despair suggests to us that hopeless Question which our murmuring Progenitors asked in their time of Tryal, * *Can God furnish a Table in the Wilderness?* Can he supply us with Food and Rayment, when our Estates are taken from us, and we are robbed of all that we have, and are driven into strange Countries, where we find nothing like our own, but the same Spirit of Uncharitableness towards our selves? Can he suppress those who triumph over us, reduce the Rebels, restore the King, and those who suffer with him, and for him, to their Country again, without Armies? And where are those Armies? When he hath furnished a Table for us in the Wilderness, supplied us with what is necessary in our Imprisonment and Banishment, and given us Health and Strength, which we should hardly have preserved in our Excesses: When he hath terrified our Enemies with Distrust and Jealousy of one another, and brought them to Confusion, without being subdued by a more powerful Army, and brought every disdainful, and every distrustful Tongue to acknowledge the Folly, as well as the Profaneness of their Expostulations, and to confess that he hath in Truth done that which they conceived and declared to be impossible; he will surely expect another kind of Semblance and Countenance from us, than what we wear in the Reception of his common Favours, and in our ordinary Supplications and Addresses to him: Our private and domestick praising him will not serve the Turn; we must make a joyful Noise to him, declare and publish to all the World his Omnipotence and his Mercy, and instruct others to serve and rely, and depend on him by our Example. They who are reserved in such Seasons, and make no Noise, and pretend to conceive much in their Heart, though they utter little with their Tongue, are to be suspected rather to harbour vain and proud Thoughts of themselves, of their own Merit and Abilities in their Hearts, than pious and devout Thoughts of his Power and Glory, which if it be rightly apprehended, will be gladly communicated.

If it please God to repeat in us the Blessings and Deliverances which he hath formerly conferred upon any People in Distress, to turn the Sea into dry Land, that we go through the Flood on Foot, makes our Progress and Passage through this World so secure, that the Waves and Billows of that Sea, the impetuous Rage and Fury of our proud, and cruel,

* Psal. lxxviii. 19.

and bloodthirsty Enemies; nor (which is the more fatal Deluge) the Torrent of our own Passions and Affections do not overwhelm us, whilst we see some overborn by those Waves, made a Prey and a Sacrifice to that Power, and others swallowed up and devoured by their own Ambition and Covetousness, it is no less a Miracle of his Goodness to us, than the dividing the *Red-Sea*, or drying up *Jordan* for the Passage of the Children of *Israel*; nor ought we to raise less Trophies and Monuments of our Deliverance for the one, than they did for the other. If he thinks us worthy to be exercised in some sharp Affliction and Calamity, to try what Fruit his Grace and good Spirit hath produced in us, and so brings us into the Net, gives our Enemies Strength to prevail upon us, to deprive us of our Liberty, to cast us into Prison, and to drive us into Banishment; and improves this sad Condition of ours with that Circumstance of making mean and inferior People, those whom we looked upon as our Servants, and Men very much below us, the Instruments of this Tyranny and Cruelty against us, that such Men now ride over our Heads, tread down all our Rights and Privileges, and oppress and triumph over us to that Degree that we dare not lift up our Heads: If he cause us to pass through Fire, and through Water, exposes us to the enraged Swords of those who hate us in Battel, and to their Axes on Scaffolds, and to their softer Persecutions of Reproaches, Wants and Imprisonments, or unites Two Factions as contrary as those Elements, to conspire our Ruin and Destruction; and after all this, preserves us by his Providence like Gold, that none of our Virtue is wasted in this Tryal, but that we come the brighter out of that Fire, and the cleaner out of that Water, and then carries us into our own Country, or to our own Possessions, or gives us Assurance of living for ever with him in a much better and a richer Place; we must not fail on our Part, but pay him all the Sacrifices of Thanksgiving and Joy imaginable; and especially those Vows which our Lips have uttered, and our Mouths have spoken when we were in Trouble; practise that Charity we professed when others were full of Revenge and Injustice towards us; that Humility we proposed, when we suffered under the Pride and Insolence of those who pursued us; and that Obedience which we magnified and valued our selves upon when other Mens Rebellion had reduced us to Extremities. These are the sweet-smelling Sacrifices with which God is delighted, and which he always graciously rewards; and by granting us the Effect of our Prayers, justifies us that we prayed to him with such a Heart as is acceptable to him.

GRacious Father, who art so wonderful in all thy Doings, that they who bear no Reverence or Affection to thee, are compelled to confess the Greatness of thy Power, and to submit to thy Will: Bless, protect and preserve us, we beseech thee, and let not the Rebellious exalt themselves. Though thou hast brought us very low, and hast laid Affliction upon our Loins, suffered us to be laden with Reproaches, and to receive many Wounds and Stripes from our merciless and tyranical Adversaries, yet thou hast hitherto not suffered our Feet to be moved, kept us steady and constant to our Duty, and from swerving from thy Commandments, and therefore we hope thou wilt in thy own Time bring us out into a wealthy Place, to Ease and Rest from those Afflictions: However, give us Grace to perform all the Promises we have made to thee, and to extol thy Name with our

Tongue, with such a joyful Noise, as may draw those who have not enough depended on thy Deliverance, to join with us in a chearful Acknowledgment of thy wonderful Mercy. Amen.

P S A L M LXVII.

WE can have no Desire so agreeable to Christianity, as that all the World were Christians; that God had vouchsafed to all Men the same Knowledge of himself, as he hath been graciously pleased to do to us; that the Sunshine of his Grace had dissolved and dispersed all those Clouds and Fogs of Ignorance and Infidelity which cover so many miserable Nations which inhabit the Earth; and that all the Ends of the World understood, and acknowledged, and submitted to his Law and Empire. And this charitable Wish ought to make so deep an Impression in our Hearts, that even the Sense of our own Happiness, and the Comfort we enjoy in being admitted by him into the Communion of his Church, ought to be the less, out of our Grief and Sorrow, and Compassion for those who have no Knowledge of that Truth, without which they cannot be saved. This was the Charity that so transported St. Paul, * *When he could have wished that himself were accursed from Christ for his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh*; that they might all have enjoyed so transcendent a Benefit, he could have been even content himself to have been deprived of his part of it; and there was no Danger attended such an Excess of Piety and Charity. Indeed we are not as good as we ought to be, if we do not feel a real Pain and Grief of Soul, that all other Men are not as good as we; we are not innocent, if we are not heartily troubled for the Guilt of others, and afflicted, that they will not be persuaded to be happy. They who think the better of their own Religion because others are not of it; and make such a Fence about their Religion, of Laws and Oaths, and Obligations, as instead of inviting and alluring Men to the Practice and Profession of it, fright and terrify them from approaching it, or use the unnatural Means of drawing Men to it by Force, and of driving others from them, for not believing all indifferent and circumstantial Things which they believe, have expunged this Psalm out of their Liturgy, though they are sometimes content, for Form-sake, to pronounce and rehearse it.

Since then our whole Times ought to be spent in using our utmost Diligence and Endeavour to confirm those who are in the Right, and to convert those who are in the Wrong, and in Prayer that God will make his Truth so manifest, that all Men may have a clear Knowledge and Understanding of it; it is a wonderful Thing how it comes to be made a Question, whether it be lawful to make a League or Peace with Persons of a false Religion, or who have no Knowledge of Religion at all; which truly seems to be ungrounded upon any sober Scruples of Conscience or Devotion, and will easily open a Door to the License which too many Men take upon the Frenzy of their own Opinions, to conclude the Religion of those they like not, to be false: And a Man shall not go far to find others, who think the Professors of some Opinions confessedly Christian, because they differ from what they believe, to be

* Rom. ix. 3.

be worse than *Turks* or *Pagans*, and so no doubt will easily consent that no Peace is to be had with them: Whereas the Elements of Christian Religion advise and enjoin a Peace with all Men; that is, to refrain and avoid all Acts of Hostility with all the World that will live peaceably with us, as the best, if not the only way to propagate the true Religion, and all manner of Truth: If it be otherwise, *St. Paul* looked not through the Business, when in direct Terms he enjoins us, * *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.* And it is very strange, that they who do believe that the Conscience cannot be compelled by Force and Violence to think otherwise than as it is informed, can believe that there are any People in the World with whom we should not preserve Peace; except they think that they are a sort of Men whom God hath so Reprobated, that he would by no Means have them reduced from their Error, and instructed in the Knowledge of him; and that these Men are to beget others of the same Infidelity to the end of the World: Which Conclusion, how inevitably soever it must follow from such Propositions, no Man is arrived at the Madness and Wickedness to avow. We know the firm League which *David* had with *Hiram*, † and that *Solomon* after his Father's Death renewed the same, according to the Wisdom which God had given him; and it will not be easy to prove, that a Christian King may not make the same Peace and League with the *Great Turk*, *Mogul*, or *Tartar*, who are as near the true Religion as *Hiram* was; and to settle such a Correspondence with them, as upon Communication of Manners, and the Exercise of those Offices of Justice and Humanity which are grateful to all Mankind, may beget a Reverence and Affection to their Persons, and by Degrees insil those Principles into them, upon the true Knowledge whereof those Virtues are exactly practised.

If then such an Averseness, and renouncing the Conversation of and the Correspondence with those who are even without the general Notions of Christianity, be against the Charity of this Psalm, how much more unjustifiable must the Acrimony and Animosity be, which proceeds merely from Differences in Opinion upon collateral Propositions of Religion, and extends it self with such Pride and Fury, that less than a Separation from each others Communion is not thought of and prosecuted; nor are more severe Punishments devised by them for an obstinate and malicious Breach of either of the Two Tables, than they assign for Mistakes, or for but very Doubts in Opinions, which have never been so clearly stated and determined as to give Rules to wise Men to submit to. Indeed, that any Men should be punished meerly for Error in Opinion, seems to be not only against the uncontrollable Liberty of the Soul of Man, which cannot be restrained or constrained to other Thoughts than what result from the natural Faculties of the Understanding, but against the Elements of Justice, and the Nature and Definition of Punishment it self; for the School-Men define (*pæna*) to be *malum passionis, quod infligitur ob malum actionis*: And therefore that Punishment must be very unnatural which is inflicted for erroneous Thoughts, from whence no unlawful Action hath proceeded, nor any seditious Proposition hath resulted, from whence the publick Peace might be disturbed. Besides, the End of Punishment is frustrated, which is not originally intended for what is past and remediless, but to prevent the like Mischief for the future; which End is not attained in

* Rom. xii. 18.

† 1 Kings v. 12.

the Case which we are now considering; for Experience tells us, that the Punishment of one Man for matter of Opinion, promulgates and publishes the Opinion more than it suppresses, and in Truth more than neglecting it could do; there being usually somewhat of Patience and Courage, and Composure, that attends Persons who suffer in that Kind, which begets an Enquiry and Estimation that produces other Effects. So that except where Remedies are provided infinitely in Proportion above the Diseases, (which is the highest Measure of Injustice) we see few Cures performed by those rigorous Inquisitions.

Let us therefore with that Affection and Charity as becomes the Servants of one Master, and the Children of one Father, be indulgent to one another's Infirmities, and compassionate of one another's Weakness, and remember that the same Understanding is not necessary for every Officer of the Family, and that he that knows least may labour as faithfully, and be as useful to the House, as he that knows more; and that all the Children are not to have the same Portion, and yet they may be all equal in the Parents Affection and Estimation; and the Father and the Master are the sole Judges what Offences ought to be punished with Severity and Rigor, and can mitigate that Rigor as they please. It will then become us to join with all People who desire to praise God; and if they are ignorant of the right way of doing it, to advise and instruct them with that Candour, as may encourage them to learn of us, and to converse with them with that Civility and Meekness, as may reconcile their Affections and Inclinations to us. This is the way to make the Earth yield her Increase, such an Increase as God takes Delight in, an Increase of Christian Conversation, of Brotherly Affection, of Knowledge, of Humility, of Justice, and of Charity, and of all those Graces which will prevail with him to shower down all temporal Blessings upon us in this World, and an Assurance of eternal in the World that is to come.

GRACIOUS God, we render thee all possible and humble Thanks for that thou hast vouchsafed us the Light of thy Gospel, and the Knowledge of the wonderful Things which thou wroughtest for Mankind in our Creation and our Redemption. We most humbly beseech thee extend this thy Mercy to all the Nations of the World, that none of them remain ignorant of those high Mysteries, the Knowledge whereof is necessary to their Salvation. Since thou didst suffer thy only begotten Son to undergo Reproaches and Contempt, and an ignominious violent Death as a Malefactor, to expiate for the Sins of the whole World, as well Jews as Gentiles; let no Part be ignorant of that high and transcendent Favour, and of the Title they have to thy Mercy, if they practise those Christian Virtues which thou hast enjoined. Give us all true Charity, heartily to wish the Conversion of all Men to thy Truth, and then make us happy Instruments, by our virtuous Lives and Examples, without any Animosity against those who are not of our Mind, to reduce those who are in the Wrong to the true Fear of thy Name. Amen.

Thus far at MADRID.

P S A L M

P S A L M LXVIII.

Antwerp. 16th July 1651.

I Will scatter them as the stubble that passeth away by the wind of the wilderness*, says the Spirit of God, against those perverse, obstinate Sinners, who were so accustomed to do evil, that they could no more do good, *than the Ethiopian could change his skin, or the Leopard his spots*; such Men must not expect an ordinary Judgment, to be absolved after a light Penance, or reformed by a short temporary Affliction, but an Eradication, a Dissipation by such an uninterrupted Wind, that it shall not be possible ever to gather them together again. God may for some time sit still, and be so far from scattering those he hates, from dissolving those Combinations he sees entred into against him, and against them who are faithful to him, that he may suffer them to be united in Humours and Affections very wicked, and confirmed and strengthened by Issues and Successes very prosperous, and conducing to their worst Ends: He may quietly look on, whilst the Fume and Smoke of their Vanity, and Ambition, and Hypocrisy, do not only dazzle their own Eyes, hinder them from discerning those Paths which he hath prescribed to them to walk in, but gather itself into so thick a Cloud, that it covers them from being discerned by other Men, conceals their Artifice and their Ill from the Eyes of the World, that they are not thought to be so ill as in truth they are: But he will in the End disperse those Clouds, and drive away that Smoke; discover and expose their Folly and their Pride to Contempt and Infamy, and dissolve all those Combinations in which they had glewed and cemented themselves together by Leagues and Covenants, as Wax is melted before the Fire; as soon as he will vouchsafe to appear, (and he will appear soon enough to preserve all who put their Trust in him) all their Policy shall be deluded, and their Power suppressed, the wicked must perish at the Presence of God.

It is one of the heaviest Judgments that God inflicts upon wicked Men, and the highest Instance of his Displeasure against them, that this Consideration of his Presence, and of his Power, makes no Impression upon them, towards the restraining them from or in one sinful Action: That though they know that every Device and Machination of theirs is so light, that the least Breath or Motion of his scatters and annihilates it, as the Smoke is driven away, they have not one Device or Machination the less; though they have heard and seen so many Evidences of his particular Care and Protection of pious and innocent Men, and so many Miracles wrought by him for their Deliverance, they have not one Thought or Purpose the less of persecuting and destroying them; and though they have seen in all Ages his Love and his Jealousy of his Church, his Anger against, and his Detestation of all those who would oppress or profane her, they have still the same impious Resolutions, and promise themselves success in their Impiety and Sacrilege. And indeed, God does not intend these Examples and Monuments of his Greatness and his Justice, so much for the Conversion and Reformation of ill Men, as for the Encouragement and Confirmation of good and virtuous Persons,

* Jeremiah xiii. 24.

sons, who cannot but find an inward Joy and Comfort in the Knowledge that all those Tempests and Storms of his Anger are raised for the Vindication of that Truth which they profess and suffer for. To those who are made Orphans and Widows, for the Virtue and Integrity of their Fathers and their Husbands, whom the Inhumanity and Cruelty of powerful and prosperous Enemies hath banished and massacred, because they would not concur with them in their Wickedness, it must be a wonderful Erection of their Spirits, to know that God will be a Father of those Fatherless, and a Judge of those Widows: That though they are scattered abroad into several Kingdoms by Banishment, their Estates taken from them, and their Names even forgotten, and their Memories worn out, he will again gather those dissipated Branches together, bring the Husband and the Wife, the Father and the Son, the Brother and the Sister, the Master and the Servant, the Subject and the King, to be again one Family, to enjoy his Blessing in one Kingdom, and to be joint Sharers in the same Happiness, as they have been joint Sufferers under the same Persecution; and as they have been at all Distances united in the same Affections and faithful Desires, so they will be again united in the publishing and declaring how wonderfully God hath wrought the same Deliverance for them.

If we had as clear Evidence of the Time when this Recollection, this gathering together shall be, as that it shall be at some time; and were as sure that God will shortly be present with us, as we are that his Presence (when he vouchsafes to arise) will scatter all our Enemies, and bring their wicked Devices to nought, it would be an easy matter to preserve our selves from that Dejection of Spirit which overtakes and almost confounds us in our unjust Sufferings. We should not be much troubled, though we lay for a Time among the Pots, were cast in loathsome Dungeons; or being stripped of all that we had, were exposed to those Wants and Necessities, that we were not able decently to appear before the Faces of Men, and so were contemned as Persons not worth the looking after; if we were sure shortly to rise again out of this Dungeon, to be adorned with our old Plenty and Neatness, and to enjoy so beautiful a Condition, as to draw the Eyes of all Men upon us. Let the high Hills leap and extol themselves as they please, the Hill of Rebellion, and the Hill of Perjury, and the Hill of Sacrilege overlook and threaten us, and appear so fresh and green, as if they were the only Food and Nourishment; if it were evident, that the white Hill of Innocence would in any reasonable time erect itself above the other, and that all our Sorrow should be turned into Joy, very little Courage would serve to produce Patience enough in us, to expect such a Mutation. But it is our Glory (if we continue innocent) that we are so far from knowing the Time of our Deliverance and Triumph, that we are not to be confident that it will be in this World; for though God does very frequently dispense those his extraordinary Blessings (and we may hope that he will vouchsafe to do so in our Case) in that manner, and at such a Time, that there may be most Declarers and Publishers of it, that the Notice of such his wonderful Goodness may be best, and most generally spread; yet it is not always necessary that we our selves must be those Declarers and Publishers. It is possible our Children may prove better Preachers of those his Benefits than we our selves; and if after all Calamities undergone by us for the Testimony of a good Conscience, after the End of our Lives in Prison or Banishment, and after

such a Seizure and Confiscation of our Estates, that we seem utterly extirpated out of our own Country, and our Names worn out and forgotten there, God shall hereafter restore our Children to the Possession of those Estates, and shall bless and prosper them in that lost Inheritance of ours, and cause them to be looked upon, and better esteemed for the Memory of what we have done, and what we have suffered; it will be as signal a Monument of his Mercy and Deliverance, and acceptance of our Service, as if it had been dispensed in our own Time, and to our own Persons: And it will be enough for us, that after he hath given us Grace in some Degree, and as far as in us lies, to follow the Example of our Saviour himself, even in the leading Captivity captive, in mastering and subduing those Fears of Dangers, and Temptations of Profit and Advantage, which would captivate our Understandings and our Consciences, and incline us to comply with that wicked Power that prospers, we do bear our Afflictions with that Alacrity and Chearfulness, which becomes the good Cause for which we suffer; and that by laying down our Lives, we become a Sacrifice for that Truth which we could not otherwise defend and vindicate; and that God the Lord, to whom alone belong the issues of Death, chuses to give us our Reward after this Life ended, without delivering us from that Death which the Malice and Cruelty of our Enemies desire to bring upon us, reserving to himself the Time when, and the Manner how he will humble the Pride, and suppress the Power of those who are risen against him, and scatter the People that delight in War.

Almighty Father, we do sing praises to thy holy Name, for thy gracious Promises which thou hast made unto us, to be a Father of the Fatherless, and a Judge of the Widows; give us Grace, that by the Innocence and Integrity of our Consciences, and our humble and entire Confidence and trust in Thee, we may apply all those Examples of thy wonderful Mercy and Protection of thy chosen and faithful People, to our own comfort and consolation. Arise, O Lord, in thy Favour towards us, and scatter those our cruel and blood-thirsty Enemies, who having driven us unjustly out of our own Country, continue still their Persecution, and endeavour to starve us in Banishment; interpose thy Power on our Behalf, that all their imaginations and machinations which they have framed against thy Church, against their King, and against their innocent and faithful Brethren, may melt as the Wax against the Fire, and be driven away as the Smoke against the Wind. Carry us back again into our own Country, and infuse the Spirit of Loyalty and Obedience into that Country: However, let us spend the remainder of our days with that Innocence, that after our Death we may live with thee for ever. Amen.

P S A L M LXIX.

Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope, says St. Paul to the Romans. Indeed if we have*

* Rom. xv. 4.

have Integrity and Innocence in our Hearts, and are without Patience and Hope in our Distresses and Calamities, we have read the Scripture to no Purpose, and have our selves changed that which was written for our Learning and Comfort, into a Reproach and Accusation. Our Afflictions may flow so high, that they may not only overwhelm our Fortunes, deliver those up as a Prey to our Enemies, but threaten, and even seize upon our Lives by Imprisonments, or Famine, or Massacres; they may be of such a Condition, and pursue us to such a Degree, that even those Principles and Promises upon which we principally depended, may not appear strong enough to support us, but that we may be ready to sink in Despair of ever having our Prayers hearkened unto, or our Lamentations considered: Yet, when we have a little recollected our Spirits out of the Amazement and Trance into which some sudden and astonishing Circumstance of, or addition to our Sufferings hath cast us, and which, in the natural course of Calamities, we were not to expect, we shall not only find Cause of Patience, but of Glory, even from that Weight and Measure which is so like to overwhelm us. If we are persecuted without a Cause, and the Power of our Enemies is so great, their Authority so much revered, and the Multitude of them so numerous, such a Union and Consent amongst them, that they do not only over-bear and oppress our Innocence, but cause it to be suspected, make us to be thought faulty as well as unfortunate: If the Persecution we undergo be the sharper, for our Zeal and Affection to God's Service, and our Constancy to his true Religion, and made so much the more intolerable, by the Derision, and Scorn, and Reproaches, we see wickedly and profanely cast upon that Religion; and if all these Calamities befall us for other Mens Sakes, that we bear the Punishment of their Faults, and for Offences which we have not committed, we come the nearer to the Sufferings of our Saviour himself, which is a great Honour and Glory to us; and if we do imitate his Meekness, and Humility, and Patience in the bearing of them, so far imitate him as he hath put into our Power to do, we shall be sure of such a Reward, it may be Reparation in this World, as shall be more than proportionable to the Affliction we have undergone, and abundantly recompence for the Excess of them.

When the Righteousness of the Cause for which we suffer is so manifest to the World, and the Wickedness of those who prosper against us so evident and transcendent, that we do not only find an Acquiescence and Chearfulness within our selves which our Enemies are without, but another kind of Respect and Esteem, besides Compassion in our Poverty and Distress, than our Persecutors and Oppressors do in all their Glory, from Strangers, and Men who are in some degree terrified with their Prosperity, and consequently have more natural Inducements to dispose them rather to favour them than us; this is indeed such a dawning of God's Grace upon us, that may very reasonably preserve and secure us against Despair: But when our Innocence and our Virtue is so singular, that it hath no other Testimony than of our own Conscience; when they who hate us, how much without a Cause soever, have yet got so much Advantage over us, that the World thinks them in the Right, and us in the Wrong, and that we are therefore persecuted because we are in the Wrong; when the Conspiracy against us is so universal, that we have not only no sharers with us in our Misery, who beside being a Testimony to each other, do usually draw the more Compassion, but have

not any Friend to counsel, assist or comfort us, which few Men, never so guilty, are seldom without, since common Humanity yields that Comfort and Relief, and Men very notoriously wicked, are oftentimes treated with less Severity and Rigor than even their Wickedness deserves, and usually from the Tenderness and Compassion of good Men, receive some Help to the allaying the extreme Bitterness of their sufferings; and a Man of the greatest Integrity, and most uprightness of Heart that ever was, needs more the Society and Counsel of a Friend, though a weaker Man than himself, than the most diseased Person alive doth the ablest and most cunning Physician; and therefore it was the highest Aggravation of the Suffering and Agony of Christ himself, that when his Adversaries were mighty in Power, and infinite in Number, and implacable in Malice, he found not one Comforter, none to assist against so universal a Conspiracy; a more woful Condition cannot be imagined, nor to human Reason more desperate.

There seems to be so just an Expectation from the Law of Justice and of Reason, that wise Men should have the Advantage in all the Affairs of this World over weak Men, and sincere and upright Men over unfaithful and wicked Men, that all the Precepts and Presidents throughout the whole Current of Scripture, both in the Old and the New Testament, cannot yet supply Antidote enough against the Poison of repining and murmuring, and even despairing upon the Success and Prosperity of ill Men, and their Power of oppressing those who visibly and confessedly are in the Right: And though the entire Scope and Intention of the Scripture seems not more directed to any one Particular, than to prevent and root out that Opinion upon Success, indeed to prepare Men to expect it, and foresee that the Endeavours of the worst Men will be crowned with Success to their Hearts Desire, and that the just and faithful Persons must look for Trouble and Oppression, and with all the Circumstances of Insolence and Reproach from their Oppressors; notwithstanding all the unquestionable Evidence of this, that hath still appeared from the beginning of the World to this Day, the best and the most innocent Men have not been able to contain themselves from some Impatience and Amazement at this good Fortune of prosperous Wickedness; and there is no part of their sufferings they bear worse, than the insolent Reproaches and the sacrilegious and profane Wit the proud Scoffers exercise towards them; and I am persuaded, that from the Time of Julian, to this most profane and licentious Age in which we live, Christianity hath never received so desperate Wounds, nor hath been nearer expiring, by any the most bloody Persecution it hath sustained, as by the loose Tongues and dissolute Language and Behaviour of those who pretend to be Christians; nor will it ever recover its Vigor and Dominion over the Hearts of Men, till that Antichristian Spirit and Humour be rooted out, and the Manners of such reformed.

Merciful God, the longer that thou suffereſt theſe Calamities to be upon us, and our Enemies to be crowned with new Successeſſes to confirm them in their Wickedneſſes, ſtrengthen us the more with thy Grace, and give us a new ſtock of Patience to ſupport us, as well for what we may, as what we do endure. Let not the Taunts and bitter Words of thoſe who oppreſs us, have any Influence to diſquiet or diſturb us, but enable us to behave our ſelves with that Submission

to thee, and that Decency towards all Men, that by our well-bearing our Affliction, we may appear not to be worthy of it, and then in thy own good Time put a Period to it. Amen.

P S A L M LXX.

THERE is a Warmth, and even an Impatience, which well enough becomes the best and the most pious Men under any Affliction, when the Impatience only disposes them to an Importunity with God Almighty to give them his Relief; nor is it an Evidence that we are tired, and unable longer to bear his Chastisement, that we are very solicitous and earnest with him to make haste to deliver us. Let our Innocence be never so unquestionable towards Men, and their Persecution of us never so unjustifiable, we are guilty towards God of so many Transgressions, that we have merited that, and whatsoever else we do or can undergo; nor can we promise our selves the Continuance of that Courage and Constancy that we are at present possessed of from the Conscience of our Innocence, if the Sharpness of our Persecution continues and increases: And therefore God Almighty will not be displeased, if we use all imaginable Earnestness towards him to hasten our Delivery. If the Iniquity of our Adversaries be so manifest, that their Manners make them odious to all Men, and we have that good Fortune by our Virtue and fair Conversation, to have the Testimony and Compassion of many good Men; we know not how long that Detestation of their Wickedness will continue, nor how long their Good-wishes and Compassion towards us may last; a continued Success and Prosperity too frequently making Impression upon the Minds of Men, and by degrees reconciling them to those they have formerly disliked; and a continued Calamity and Oppression usually making Men weary of Compassion, and persuading them, that by an obstinate adhering to unfortunate Men, they do in a manner fight, at least contend against Providence: And in both these Respects, that ill Men may not be confirmed in their Impieties, by finding no Obstruction in their way, and that weak and easy Men may not be disheartened in the Offices they are inclined to perform towards those whom they believe to be oppressed, and so grow weary even of their Pity, it will not misbecome us to struggle with God Almighty by very vehement Sollicitations that he will no longer defer the Manifestation of his Favour towards us, and his Judgments upon them, by a speedy Deliverance. In the last Place, when our Oppressions are so terrible in respect of the Quality and of the Magnitude that no Art or Industry of our own can divert or lessen them, nor human Nature support Life under them, so that less than a Miracle of God's own immediate Hand can restore or protect us; we are not to be blamed to have our Recourse to him with so much Passion, as may look like an Expostulation with him for Delay; and he doth frequently extend his wonderful Loving-kindness to us in those Exigencies, and upon those Importunities.

GOOD God, thou knowest better than we do our selves the miserable Condition we are in, how much we have suffered, and how much more we are able to bear; thou knowest the Progress wicked

Men have made in trampling down thy own Law, and triumphing over all that is sacred with reference to thy own Service, and all that is enjoined by thee with reference to thy holy Ordinance; and how much they magnify themselves in the Evidences they think they receive of thy Favour by their Success. Make haste, we most humbly beseech thee, to undeceive them, that they may be first sensible of their Rebellion against thee, and then abhor their Rebellion against the King; and if thou wilt not reform them by this Repentance, make haste, good Lord, to reduce them by Destruction. Amen.

“Frequent Removes and Journeys, with the Distraction of the publick Affairs, and my necessary Attendance upon them, gave too long Interruption to this pious Exercise, which was not resumed in too many Years; which God I hope hath forgiven”.

P S A L M LXXI.

Montpelier 13th Decemb. 1668.

WE do not by the Experience and Wisdom of this World, apply our selves with so much Confidence for Relief and Assistance in any Distress that befalls us, as to him who hath already shewed some extraordinary Kindness towards us. He who hath once obliged us, is sure to hear from us again, as soon as we have need of the like Obligation; and the more extraordinary the Obligation is, we think we have the more Title to trouble him again: If he hath chosen to confer some Benefit upon us, without the Pretence of Merit in us, and indeed without any appearance of Hope or Imagination that we are like to merit it: If he hath had so much Generosity as to confer some notable Favour upon us, so much without our own Privy, that though we receive and feel the Advantage of it, we know not from what Hand it comes; how solicitous are we, and the Pain becomes us very well, to discover who our Benefactor hath been, and what Mountains of Gratitude do we promise and vow to him, if any Opportunity shall be offered to us; and upon the Title of this unprofitable and cheap Gratitude, we are ready to raise a new Dependance upon him, and to propose our selves new Benefits from him; though the best Men grow weary of bestowing and multiplying their Favours upon useless or unnecessary Persons, at least, have so many other fit and proper Objects of their Bounties, that they are not usually inclined to repeat them often upon one, who, without some Violation of the Laws of Modesty and Discretion, ought to expect the less, by how much the more he hath received. If we did heartily apply our selves in and by this Method to God Almighty, and put him piously in mind of the good Turns he hath done to us, of the Deliverance he hath wrought for us, of the several Testimonies we have received of his Loving-kindness throughout the whole Course of our Lives, of the Recovery and Preservation of our Health from so many Diseases, of our frequent and miraculous Escapes from those Dangers which our Enemies had contrived against us; of the Prosperity we have had a Share in, at least, from the Prosperity of our particular Friends, or of our Country; of the Promotions he hath raised us to, and the Ability he hath given us to do good to others; of the Punishments we have

have hitherto by his divine Bounty and Mercy escaped, which might have been justly inflicted upon us, and would naturally have befallen us, if not restrained by his immediate Power, for the infinite Faults and Follies of our Youth, and the more deliberate Vice and Wickedness of our riper Years: I say, we need no other Rhetorick or Logick to God Almighty, to induce him to grant all our Requests, to repeat all the Obligations, and Blessings, and Preservations he hath ever vouchsafed to us, and to finish and perfect this Work in an entire Protection, and perpetual Deliverance from all the Perils we can be hereafter assaulted with, or threatned by, than a faithful Recollection, and dutiful Representation of what he hath already done for us, and an humble Acknowledgment of his Goodness and Bounty in so doing, with the same hearty Profession and Protestation of our future Service, and the same honest Intentions which we have to perform those Professions, and make good those Protestations, when we make them to a Friend who hath so liberally obliged us, and when it may be, the very performing them may involve us in many unwarrantable Actions.

Since then there can be no doubt but that we all infinitely covet and would be most solicitous to obtain this Happiness and Protection; to be delivered from the Power and Malice of our Enemies, or the Effects and Inconvenience of that Power and Malice; and that our infirm and impotent Age may not be exposed to those Miseries and Calamities, nor fall under that Contempt and Scorn, our Youth and strength of Years have been preserved from: And since the Remedy proposed to us is so easy, and falls within the common Rules and Prescriptions of our own natural Practice, a Remedy that never failed any Man from the time of King *David* to this Hour, who hath applied it with the same Sincerity of Mind, with the same Integrity of Devotion that he did; it is very well worth our Enquiry, how we come to fail in this so sovereign Address; how we come so vigorously to retain all the Inclinations and all the Faculties for the committing those Sins which must offend and incense God against us; and to be without the Ingenuity and Application to appease him, and yet wish it were as easy to reform our selves in that Application, as it is to discover the true Reason of our Failings, which is most plain and manifest, and consists notoriously in these two Particulars: (1.) In not believing that the Benefits we receive do proceed so immediately from the Affection and Indulgence of heavenly Providence towards us, as those Offices which we sensibly and visibly receive by the Favour and Interposition of great Persons on our behalf, or by the Influence of our Prince himself. (2.) By not imagining, which is not believing that God is concerned in and takes notice of those Actions and Offences, which not being by us intended against his divine Majesty, are only directed to the Prejudice of our Neighbour, and so more requires his Pardon, and consequently our Submission to him.

There is no question we all look upon those with great Indignation, who believe us to be so sottish and so stupid, as to be guilty of those two odious Imputations, which seem so inconsistent with natural Reason, at least if it be endued with the least Light of Christianity, that if we took Pains, and exercised all our Faculties to bring us to that unbelief, it would not be in our Power to do it; which is very true; and yet by not taking that Pains, and exercising those Faculties, we do not only when we are not aware of it, fall into that Stupidity and Sottishness,

ness, but take Pleasure and Delight in it, and are unwilling to be awakened out of it, however unwilling we are that our nearest Friends should entertain so evil an Opinion of us: And yet if we will but deal honestly with our selves, and reflect upon those things which we do every Day, and upon what we do not, we must conclude both the one and the other to proceed from that Incredulity which we are so unwilling to be reproached with, and that it can in truth proceed from no other Cause. No Man who is endued with the first Notions of a Deity, who believes that there is a creating, over-ruling, disposing Power, but doth as much believe, or pretends to believe, that that Power (which is God) is omnipresent, and omniscient, that he sees all we do, and knows all we think; and yet the real and solicitous believing this one Particular, would be enough to make us excellent Men, and very good Christians; but pretend what we will, we do in truth not believe it, or worse than not believe it. There is no Man who doth not every Day restrain himself from some unlawful Action, from some indecent Expression, out of the Reverence he hath for some Person in the Company. Who was ever by the greatest Provocation, and highest Indignity, so far transported by his natural Passion and Fury, but that the casual Presence of his Prince, or Intervention of the Magistrate, hath not only restrained him from pursuing any Act of Violence, but even suppressed all appearance of Anger, or discomposure of the Countenance? Who was ever so impetuously assaulted by the most exorbitant Lust, and hath not found that Violence allayed, and that Appetite extinguished upon the Sight of a dying Man, or a very sick Friend; it may be, upon the Reverence extorted from him by the Virtue and Beauty of a Woman, which hath at first sight suppressed and subdued all unruly and all unlawful Inclinations? Without doubt, if there were any thing else that we equally loved, or equally feared, constantly in our view, it would have the same wholesome Effect upon us as those accidental Appearances have, and never fail to have; and therefore we may, indeed we must conclude, that we have none of those Objects in our sight, which would so infallibly work those Cures upon us; and how can we then pretend to believe, that God hath always his Eyes upon us, and sees all we do? And do we not in truth believe, that we have sheltered and secured our selves from his inconvenient and unwelcome Discovery, and that he cannot see us, because we will not see him? If it were otherwise, we should more tremble at any unlawful, wicked Design and Resolution, when it is first deliberated, projected and contrived within our own Breasts, than to execute it in the Sight of the Sun, and in the Presence of the greatest Magistrate, which is an Impudence the boldest Transgressor never arrived at: And we would, with at least as much Awe and Circumspection, be awaken'd and startled upon the least Pause and Scruple, which is frequently suggested to us from the Light of our own natural Reason, or some inward Reluctance or our own Conscience, in those very Deliberations and Consultations within our selves, in the contriving and digesting any very wicked Determination, which indeed are so many Errands sent by God himself to restrain us; as we are upon the opening a Door upon us, or the rushing in of a Stranger or a Friend unto us, when we most desire to be without their Company.

It is surely a very good and a commendable thing to acknowledge all the Ways we can the Favours and the Benefits we receive from all Men

of what Quality soever, and those which contribute to the raising of our Fortune, and our Credit, and Reputation in the World, with the more Industry and Application; and we may reasonably hope and propose to our selves, that from a lively and vigorous Discharge of our Gratitude for those Obligations, the same Persons may be disposed to confer new and ampler Favours upon us; and whether they be or be not, we have done no more, when we have done all we can, than we ought to do. But it is very strange that we do not at the same Time and in the first Place remember and revolve the infinite Obligations we received from the divine Providence, long before we received those from that great Man, or that Prince, and with Circumstances more confounding and obliging than those with which we are then so sensibly surprized and delighted. To be preserved alive when so many have died, who, if they had lived, might probably have been preferred before us: To be snatched from so many Dangers and Diseases with which we have seen so many of our Acquaintance and Friends overwhelmed and destroyed; and to have been preserved in those devouring Diseases in which we have seen so many Thousands fall and perish in our Sight, whilst we have (being one of a Thousand) out-lived that Disease: This is, in truth, another kind of Preference, another kind of selecting and finding us out, than when a great Man hath chosen to commend us to an Honour or an Office, before half a Dozen other Men more valuable than our selves, which we think, (and we think well) that we can never enough acknowledge with the whole Duty of our Lives; when it may be in our Hearts we do arrogantly believe, that he did but wisely, and could not have preferred a wiser Man, or fitter for the Employment. And it is yet as strange, if we made any honest Reflections upon that good Fortune, the Sense whereof so much transported us, that we should not consider, that that generous Inclination in that great Man, that gracious Disposition in that Prince towards us, hath proceeded solely from the Good-will of God, which alone kindled those Affections for our Advancement; and that though he hath not given us those Abilities and Faculties for the Discharge of those Trusts which we are too apt to believe our selves possessed of, yet that there are very many less and worse qualified than we are: So that though we are not worthy of so great Preferments, by the Blessing of God we are less unworthy than many others are; and so if the Fault be not in our selves, we may the more easily become as worthy as we need to be. That we have not this Sense, that we entertain not these Considerations, there needs no other Manifestation, than that upon such Occasions, either before or after, when we are solicitous for Promotions, or possessed of such, God sees not one Thought in our Heart of him, nor finds us once in our Closets, or private Devotions upon our Knees to him, as if he had any share in the conferring of those Benefits, or Power in disappointing or frustrating our Pretences; when our Importunity before, and even our Gratitude after, is troublesome and vexatious to those who have been contented to oblige us, it may be the sooner, that they may be freed from our Company and Solicitation. This is Declaration enough of the Affection of our Heart, upon whom our Dependance is, and who we believe to be most able to assist us, and upon whom we look as our Benefactor: Whereas, if we would take half the Pains to prepare God Almighty to favour us, as we do those great Persons; to make our selves worthy of his Countenance, as we endeavour to ap-

pear to be in the Eyes of those who we desire should be propitious towards us; if upon the receiving those Blessings which are most grateful to us, and with which our Hearts are most delighted, we would take half the Pains to acknowledge the Obligation to him, be half as solicitous and industrious in our Addresses of Gratitude to him, and in our Professions of Duty and Obedience to him; in a word, if we would treat God as we do Man, it would serve our Turn, he would look for no more at our Hand. If our Industry to please him were as visible, if our Devotion and Integrity were the same towards him, which it is, or as we pretend it to be towards Men who we believe can do us good, we should never miscarry, never be disappointed in what we go about; and upon the Accomplishment of one full Desire, we might boldly challenge God Almighty to oblige us again by that Token, to preserve us from any Danger to-Morrow, because he delivered us from as great a one Yesterday; and we should find that all good Men (for we need not fear that the paying our Vows, and Prayers, and Praises to God, will indispose us to court or depend upon Men, and to pay our Thanks to them less than we ought to do) are so much the more kind, and more forward to oblige us, that they would find a Joy and Satisfaction within themselves by so doing, and truly believe that God had appointed them to be his Instruments to do us good; and that by being chosen by him to be his Conduits to convey his Blessings to us, they may draw some upon themselves, and from thence will at the same Time oblige us, and think they are preferred to the Occasion.

But then we must take heed; God will not be mocked; though he is content with the same Payment and Addresses which we make to Men for those Benefits which he directs or permits them to confer upon us, yet he expects that whatever we offer to him be real, and that we do not think to pay him in such counterfeit Coin as we dare not offer to our Superiors. Who will ever believe in Court, that we depend only upon his Protection and Promotion, if our Conversation be with his Enemies, with those who every Day traduce him, and lie in wait to destroy him; if we labour to make our selves perfect in those Qualities which he dislikes, and if we are known to practise those Vices which he abhors? Who will be prevailed with to gratify us the second Time, to whom we have broken all the Professions and all the Vows we voluntarily, and it may be unexpectedly made to him, when he first obliged us; when we have been so far from acknowledging what he hath done for us, that we own no Beholdingness to him, but impute what we received purely from him, to the Kindness and Bounty of another; and after all our unworthy Stratagems have failed us, all our crooked Applications and new Flatteries have proved ineffectual, we resort again to our old deluded Patron, and desire him once more to advance us, because we are the Work of his own Hand, and have no other Promotion but what we have from him? Will he not tell us he will have no more to do with us; and therefore not oblige us the Second Time, because we have made so ill a Return for the First? We cannot expect any other Measure from God Almighty, and that he will suffer himself to be cozened and affronted by our Dissimulation and Impudence, which our Equals, much less our Superiors, will not suffer from us. If after all his reiterated Preservations from the Malice and Power of our Enemies, and from our own Folly and Madness, more dangerous than the other; if after so many Redemptions out of the very bottom of Destruction, into which

our

our affected Incogitance of Wickedness hath thrown us, and from the very brink of our own Despair; if after so many Years Banishment out of our Native Country by the Power and Cruelty of our merciless Enemies, and when all our Inventions for our Relief are spent, and come to nothing, and nothing left to us but the empty and barren Pity and Compassion of Strangers, he hath by his own immediate Hand, no less miraculously than of old his feeding his own chosen People was in the Wilderness, replanted us in our own Country again, subdued our Enemies, and laid them prostrate at our Feet, deprived them of all the Power they so tyrannically exercised, and invested us with all that they usurped: If after so many Ejaculations and Vows made to him in our extremest Agonies for his Deliverance, and if after such a severe Mortification, and bitter Chastisement, and gracious Redemption, we retain no other Vigor of Mind, but to revenge the Injuries we have sustained, and to make those who have done us Wrong, as miserable as we have been; if we remember only the Artifices we have used at all Times for our own Deliverance, and have the Vanity and the Madness to impute that our Deliverance to our own Wit and Contrivance, or to some foreign Accident, which might possibly enough be the Cause of such an Effect, and thereupon celebrate only our own Praises, or suffer other Men to do it, as if we owed all to our Skill and Dexterity, and to those weak Instruments which assisted us: If we can so soon forget the Light of his Countenance, which could only have guided us out of that Labyrinth of Darkness in which we were so dismally and hopelessly involved; and the Strength of his stretched-out Arm, so visibly stretched out at the same Time over Three Kingdoms, which could only have subdued and dispirited in an Instant all our Enemies; it will not be enough to recollect our selves in a new Distress, and then put him in Mind of what Wonders he wrought for us in our Youth, as an Argument not to forsake us in our Old Age; he will therefore expose us to the Weakness and Helplessness of Age, because we had so carefully wiped out of our Memory, all Thought of what he did for us in our Youth: He will renew the Courage and Confidence of our Enemies, and infuse a new Spirit into them, and Desire to do us Mischief; and they who were before too apt to conclude only upon their own Prosperity and Success that God had forsaken us, will now more reasonably believe, that by our forsaking him, and forgetting the Miracles of his Mercy towards us, he is so far irreconciled, and so irrecoverably displeased with us, that he will henceforwards leave us to the Strength of our own Imaginations, in which we have put our Confidence, and totally withdraw himself from our Protection, and that they shall not offend his divine Providence if they shall endeavour by new Attempts to reduce us to Misery, when we have so quickly forgotten the Author of our Deliverance.

O Lord God, if we have not put our entire Trust in thee, and relied upon thy absolute and immediate Protection in all our Distresses; if we have not with Humility and Ingenuity enough acknowledged thy wonderful Assistance and compleat Deliverance from the Calamities which had so near swallowed us up, by a total abandoning and renouncing the least Advantage from our own Wit and Invention, and all other Helps but those which proceed from thy immediate Goodness and Mercy: Let not, we beseech thee, that barbarous Ingratitude

gratitude to, and odious Apostacy from thy divine Majesty, so extinguish thy Compassion, as to leave us to our selves, which is to give us to our Enemies. Though we were quickly weary of acknowledging all thou hast done for us, and of performing what we had promised to thee, yet be not thou weary, O God Almighty, of giving us new Matter of Acknowledgment of thy Kindness and Bounty. O! infuse Grace into our Hearts, to make a lively Reflection upon all thy repeated Acts of Preservation and Deliverance, and thereupon a true Sorrow and Shame that such signal Blessings could be one Moment out of our Sight and Memory; and upon this hearty Recollection raise our Courage, that we may humbly represent those thy gracious Remembrances of us, as Arguments to thy Clemency not now to forget us; and the Assistance that thou didst vouchsafe to grant us in our Youth and Strength, when we were in some Degree unable to help our selves, as an Obligation upon thee not to forsake us in our Age, when we cannot help our selves, but must utterly perish without thy immediate Support and Deliverance: And this for thy Son, &c. Amen.

P S A L M LXXII.

WE cannot pray better for our selves, more effectually for the People and Nation whereof we are a Part, than when we pray for the King; and by our united Devotions draw down God's Blessing upon him: Nor can God give a greater Evidence and Manifestation of his Loving-kindness to a whole Kingdom, than by pouring out his Blessings upon the King, by giving him Length of Days, Health of Body, and a Heart endued with Wisdom and Justice. There can no Affliction or Calamity befall a Nation, but is presently relieved and removed by the Vigilance and Bounty of the King. Is any Man injured and oppressed, and hath his Estate taken from him by one who is mightier than he, against whom he knows not how to obtain Justice? ** A divine sentence is in the lips of the king, his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.* There is no Mountain so high, but his Influence will make as fruitful as the Vallies, his Justice will reduce to the same Obedience as the poorest Man pays; and make that poor Man as secure from his Oppression, as he himself is from his Rebellion; his Wisdom can neither be deluded, nor his Justice be corrupted. It is his Care, and his alone, to place such Persons over us, as may provide for us at such a Distance that he cannot see us himself and execute Justice for us, when we know not how to present our Sufferings to him; and if those his Deputies deceive his Trust, and instead of protecting us from Wrong, oppress us themselves, his Ears are always open to us, and the other shall undergo a greater Punishment than they can inflict. It is the King's Virtue and Wisdom, and Magnanimity, that maintains, and preserves, and defends the People committed to his Charge; his Example, his Precepts, and his Authority guides, and instructs, and restrains us in our Duty to God Almighty, and in our Devotions to him, by which he is wrought up to bless the King to the People in a strict and punctual Administration of Justice to them, and in his Reprehension and Punishment

ment when they do amiss; and to bless the People to the King in their entire Affection to his Person, and Obedience to his Commands, in a Confidence of his Justice and Prudence, and in a Condescension and Resignation of their Wills to his, and of their Understandings and Imaginations to his discerning Judgment and Foresight. If the Envy of our Peace and Happiness, or the Opinion of our Plenty and Wealth, shall invite Strangers to invade us, that they may deprive us of those Blessings, or be sharers with us in the Possession and Enjoyment of them; the King can only vindicate us from that Ruin, and drive them away if they come to infest us; or by visiting them at Home, divert them from the Appetite of disturbing their Neighbours. And if our own Luxury and Excesses have so far corrupted our Natures, and perverted our Understandings, that we are even weary of our own Prosperity, and ready to sacrifice it, and that Discretion and Integrity that can only preserve it, to our affected lawless Desires and brutish Appetites; so that when it hath pleased God to deliver us from the Power and Malice of our Enemies, and we are more in eminent Danger of Ruin from our own Wickedness, than we were ever by their Tyranny;

** The king that sitteth in the throne of judgment, scattereth away all evil with his eyes;* his Dislike and Displeasure against ill and impious Actions, and his Indignation against ill and impious Persons, reforms all in a Moment; his Eyes are so piercing, that wicked Men dare not stand in his Sight. Private Men, let them be never so virtuous, never so wise, can suppress no Vice, if the Person who practises it be stubborn enough to neglect Example, and contemn Advice, as such Men naturally are; and subordinate Magistrates can only punish particular Persons, not make their Guilt and Crimes odious to the World; nor terrify the Standards by from those Enormities and transcendent Transgressions, for which they see Men undergo the most severe and most rigorous Chastisements: But the King at once reclaims a whole Nation, makes Shame and Fear terrify those whom Conscience could not: And they who dare look God in the Face, give no Credit to his Promises, nor Respect to his Threats or Punishments, have not yet the Courage to disobey what the King commands, and will rather abstain from their most beloved Vices, than undergo the Penalty of his provoked and incensed Justice and Displeasure.

As there was never a greater nor a nearer Type of our Saviour himself, than was represented to the World in the Person of a great, and a virtuous, and a wise King, so there cannot be a nearer Resemblance upon Earth to him reigning in his Kingdom, than a Religious, Pious, and Just Prince, governing his People with Love and Justice, discountenancing and suppressing impudent and dissolute Men, of how great Quality soever, and supporting and cherishing those whose Modesty, love of God and good Men, and of the publick Peace and Honour, have made more conspicuous, though of an inferior Condition; and a People solicitous to pay all the Affection, Duty and Obedience imaginable to his Commands, who impute all the Happiness they are or can be possessed of, to his subduing their Passions, and governing their Affections. This blessed Harmony between King and People, is always attended with Admiration and Application, and Reverence from all Strangers; and the Kings and Princes of all the Corners of the Earth, will use their utmost Endeavours, by Presents, and by Embassies, to procure the Friendship

of such an united Power and Strength; and will propose to themselves, by observing the same Rules and Methods, to obtain the Possession of the same Happiness, Joy and Tranquility.

These are the Delights and the Benefits we enjoy under gracious and wise Princes, which we may always hope to enjoy under them, and are sure we can never enjoy any other way: Yet if we have not always the entire Possession of all these Blessings under the Government of a Prince to whom we are subject; if he doth not hearken to our Complaints with that Clemency we desire; if he hath a better Opinion of, and gives a willinger Ear to some Men, who we believe in regard of their Corruptions are not worthy of that Condescension, and chuses rather to follow their Advices, than the Counsels of those who are better qualified; if he doth somewhat he ought not to do, and suffers others without controul to do what no other Power but his own can restrain them from doing; if he punishes us without a Cause, and grieves us without Measure, we must not for all this, or for any thing else, withdraw our Obedience from him; we must not so much as murmur in private, much less traduce him to others, that his Goodness and Justice may be called in question. Though a Man may give ease to his own Breast by breathing out his Lamentations with very innocent Intentions, no Man knows what Influence those Lamentations may have, and what Impressions they may make upon other Men; what Reproaches, and what Calumnies may by them be compounded out of those very Lamentations; and then what bold and unwarrantable Conclusions, and what pernicious and destructive Conspiracies may be the Effects of those Reproaches. They who are too inquisitive into the Weakness and Infirmities of Princes, and solicitous to discover those Vices in them, which they ought to be presumed to be without, make as great a Progress as they can in the Presumption and Impiety of *Cham*, to have a view of the Nakedness of their Parent; and their licentious Curiosity can have no other end, nor be satisfied any other way, than by doing the best they can, as he did, first to cause him to be derided, and then, which is the natural Effect of Derision, to be contemned. We ought to believe that any Defects in the King, of Will, of Inclination, of Understanding, whereby those Blessings we would enjoy are obstructed in their Passage towards us, proceed from Defects of Affection and Duty in us towards him; that our want of Reverence to, and of Confidence in him, do reasonably produce Distrust and Jealousies of our Integrity, and so withhold and interrupt those Bounties which would otherwise flow from him; and therefore, that we must first reform our selves, and perform our part better, before we can justly expect the same Measure of Felicity from, and under him, which God usually vouchsafes to a sober and an innocent People.

*The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water, he turneth it whither soever he will**. It would be too great a Prerogative for the King himself, to be able to make a Land fruitful that affects to be barren, and labours that it may be overgrown with Weeds and Thistles; to make a proud, faithless and perverse Nation happy and flourishing, which will not understand, nor walk in those ways which lead unto their Peace. He can turn that River of Water, that it shall like wholesome Rain refresh that Ground that hath yielded any Fruit, that hath been so cultivated as to encourage the Application of good Husban-

* Prov. xxi. 1.

Husbandry; and that it shall water that Earth which hath been scorched or parched with too much Heat; relieve and cherish those faint and broken Spirits which have undergone Oppression and Persecution, and yet retained their Dependence upon him, and manifested their Submission to him: He can turn those Rivers of Water out of their proper Channel; cause them to run over their Banks instead of watering; to drown the adjacent Earth, instead of administering Ease, and Comfort, and Joy unto their Subjects; to exercise them under severe Commands, and heavy Impositions: And whether he shall chuse to do the one or the other, it is so much his own immediate Act, that we must not murmur or repine at it, much less endeavour to bridle those Water-Courses, and to restrain and enclose those Rivers within their Banks, by raising other Banks to oppose its Current, and building new Sluices and Dams to divert and limit them from running whither it hath a mind to go, that is, whither they are turned to go; no sturdy Opposition, no forceable Controuling must be applied to rectify and regulate the Heart of the King; since it is in the Hand of God, he will not need nor endure any help from our Hand; and therefore we can only pray to him that he will turn it; and if we do all that concerns us to do, he will in due time, and time enough, soften the Heart to Tenderness and Compassion, and even to Sorrow for its own Hardness, and then enlarge it to a bountiful and liberal Remorse, till we are fully redressed and satisfied for all our Damages and Sufferings, and for our meritorious Patience and Submission.

Preserve the King, O God, in his full and just Power and Greatness; and give him all the Wisdom, and Virtue, and Honour, which thou didst grant to Solomon; and restrain him from all those inordinate Desires, and immoderate Inclinations, which lessened and corrupted all that Wisdom, and Virtue, and Honour of Solomon. Let not a grateful Memory of the stupendious Mercies thou hast shewed to him, and wrought for him, be ever out of his Heart, which is in thy Hand; work upon the Hearts and Affections of all his Subjects, that they may have a lively Sense that their Duty to him, and Confidence in him, is a Branch of their Duty and Confidence in thee, and cannot be separated from it; make Prince and People believe, that their mutual Performance to each other, of what thou hast enjoined to them both, is the best Assurance they can have that they shall hereafter enjoy the Comfort of each other in thy heavenly Kingdom. Amen.

P S A L M LXXIII.

IT was no less than an Expostulation which the Prophet Jeremiah thought fit to make with God himself; * *Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?* He found, that Success and Prosperity in their Wickedness, did not only confirm those who received the Fruit thereof, but corrupt many who were not like to yield to any other Temptation; and tho' all Men were not alike infected by it, to repine and murmur at the Providence

* Jeremiah xii. 1.

dence of God in those Cases, yet very few were or are so fortified, as not somewhat to wonder, a little to be disturbed at those glorious Prospects; no Deliberation, no Observation is Antidote enough against that Poison of Envy, of Indignation, at least of Amazement. The Truth is, there are certain Imbecilities in human Nature, so much of the Substance of it, and so inseparable from it, that they do upon the Matter live and die together, and no Experience of what hath always been, no Foresight of what inevitably must be, can enough prepare us to submit to it wisely, and resolutely, and chearfully, when it doth come to pass. There is nothing so confessedly certain, as that all Men living must die; and least we should flatter our selves with a Hope or Imagination that this Dissolution may be deferred, there is no one Day passes, in which we do not see very many younger than our selves put into their Graves; and that we may not expect any Warning to be given us, to have this inevitable Death ushered towards us by long Sickness, and grievous Diseases, which might dispose us to part very willingly with that Life which is so troublesome to us, nothing so common as to hear that a Man with whom we have spent the whole Day in Jollity, whom we left at parting in the same Health and Vigor as our selves, is dead before the Morning, dead without the least Moment of Apprehension; and yet these frequent Experiments, these lively Demonstrations of our Mortality do very rarely make us the fitter, never the willinger to leave this World. There was never any Age of the World, never any Nation in the World, which hath not yielded a Million of Examples of Persons of the most infamous Lives, of the most prostituted Consciences, the greatest Contemners of Virtue, Religion, and of God himself, who have attained to the highest Degrees of Honour, to the greatest Possession of Wealth, and have made all that Progress through the Blood, and upon the Ruin of excellent Men, and by all the foul ways of Perjury, Fraud and Violence: How many have we seen with our Eyes, under that Character, and in that Station, and (which should naturally allay all Envy of their Condition) how many have we seen of those specious Images, fall from the Pinacles on which they seemed to be firmly seated, and dashed in Pieces? So that their Ascent was not more wonderful and prodigious, than their Precipitation was miraculous and formidable: And yet we are not the more contented with our own unprofitable, unprosperous Innocence, nor the less surprized or disquieted at their eminent Iniquity, and successful Wickedness.

Philosophy cannot give us a better Receipt against the Accidents of human Life, than to look upon whatsoever may come, as come already; and so by having the View of it always before us, we can have no Excuse for being surprized, much less for being confounded with it, be it Sickness, be it Poverty, be it Banishment, be it Death it self; and Divinity cannot give us a better Prescription, a more sovereign Application to suppress our Anger, and to abate our Wonder, than by assuring us that evil Doers shall be cut off, but those that wait upon the Lord shall inherit the Earth; that yet a little while and the Wicked shall not be; though they are in great Power, and spread themselves like a Green Bay-tree, seem to have taken a Root, and to extend themselves in a numerous Posterity, they shall be cut off; so notoriously and so speedily cut off, that we shall see it, and see no Footsteps left of their Greatness, no Monument of their Pride, but their Ruin. Notwithstanding all these Prescriptions, all these Convictions, they have not

the same Operation upon our Faculties and Understandings, as many other Parts of less authentick Histories have; but we are much surprized, and offended, and discouraged, upon any new and fresh Instances of such Success, as if we had no Intimation of the Success that must attend that Success, or no Cordial administred to us to support our Spirits from fainting whilst the Experiment lasts: And whilst we are not ashamed to be exalted or cast down, upon the unskilful Calculation of our own or our Friends Nativities, as good or ill Fortune is presaged to us by the Conjunction of Humours and unsteady Planets, which never intimated or implied the same Destiny to two several Men born in the same Conjunction; and when the Priests themselves who sacrifice to those Oracles, must be instructed in many Particulars which are past, before they will communicate any thing that is to come; and therefore they chuse rather to make their Conjectures in the middle Age of Man, when they may know by his past Life and Actions, what Influence the Stars have had upon his Fortune, and from thence are the more confident of their Positions for the remaining Part of his Life, than at the Time of the Nativity it self; when they confess that their Rules are so far from certain, that they have little in them of Probability; the Nature, and Disposition, and Inclination, and the very Inclination of the Subject, contributing very much to the Discovery of the Operation of the Stars and Planets: I say, we are not ashamed to subject our selves to Hopes and Fears upon such vain, deceitful, and (to say no worse) ridiculous Considerations; whilst we are not prepared by our own Observation and Experience of the Growth, and Progress, and Confusion of wicked Men, nor confirmed by the Predictions and Judgment of God himself, upon the Nativity, and from the Nativity of such Persons, by the infallible Operation of all the Elements, and the heavenly Bodies: But every new Transcription of an old Copy, every new Example of the Triumphs of ill Men, as if it were a Prodigy that Nature had never before been acquainted with, and a Miracle never before wrought, or permitted by Providence, breaks in upon us with such Power and Violence, that we are shaken in our firmest Resolutions, and almost divested of the Comfort and Consolation of not being Sharers with them in their Guilt.

And it is no wonder, when we find the Man after God's own Heart so terribly assaulted, and even terrified with this Prospect, that he was not able to stand, his Feet failed him; and if he had stood only on his own Feet, he had fallen without doubt; the Burthen that was upon his Mind and Spirit was too heavy, too painful for him to bear, till he resorted to God himself for Counsel and Courage. But then, lest we may not enough be ashamed of our Folly and Weakness, when God's own Champion had not Strength enough to stem that Torrent, we must consider the immense Difference between the Trouble and the Passion that *David* was in, and the Discontent and Murmur that we are transported with upon those Emergencies in those Seasons; his Grief and Consternation proceeded from the same Source, which so near overwhelmed the Prophet *Jeremiah*, * *because the word of the Lord was made a reproach against him, and a derision daily*. He had born the Injustice and Persecution of *Saul* with Courage and Magnanimity enough, and had seen a fair end of it, and could warrantably conclude from thence, what the other Designs of his Enemies would come to: He had indeed all his

Dome-

* Jer. xx. 8.

Domestick Troubles and Vexations, the Contempt and Derision of his Wife, the Insolence and Impetuosity of his Servants, the Wickedness and Rebellion of his Children, without any notable Dejection of Spirit; but when he saw the Power and Providence of Heaven questioned, slighted and reproached, the Misery and Oppression of good Men quietly submitted to by them, laughed at, and their Confidence of Deliverance from God derided, and made opprobrious to them, he was impatient that the Execution of that Judgment should be deferred a Moment, which he knew well must inevitably be their Portion; when by the suspending it, the intolerable Weight of the Transgressions, and the Number of the Transgressors was every Day so much increased. It were to be wished, that other Mens Impatience and Distemper in like Cases were of the same Nature, that they proceeded only from their Apprehension and Jealousy of the Indignity offered to God (who will still best know how to vindicate his own Honour); but there is too much Cause to doubt, that our Repinings proceed for the most part from and for our selves, out of Anger and Indignation to bear and sustain the Yoak that is upon us, and even out of Envy of their exalted Condition and Glory; we neither consider or care what their End shall be, what shall become of them hereafter; their Beginning and their Progress hath been so fortunate, is so full of Lustre, that too many wish that they had set out with them in the Morning, and enjoyed the Sunshine of the whole Day in their Company, though they should be obliged to pass the Night in the same devouring Tempests, and dismal Darkeness with them; so sottishly and impiously fond we are of what is present, and so impudently and ungraciously careless of what is to come, how infallibly so ever it is to come.

Upon the whole Matter, we cannot spend too much Time; use too much Deliberation upon this precious Argument, an Argument fit for our most solitary Walks, and most retired Thoughts, fit for our most spiritual Contemplations, and most fervent Devotions. Let not the profane, and rebellious, and sacrilegious Person, how prosperous and successful soever, foolishly say, * *I have sinned, and what harm hath happened unto me? for the Lord is long-suffering, he will in no wise let thee go.* Let him seriously and sadly consider, whether the Pleasures that he seems most visibly, most sensibly to be possessed of, are not in Truth rather painted and fictitious, than real and substantial; even in the present rather beheld and looked upon by other Men, than enjoyed by himself; let him well weigh, whether the Triumphs and Splendor of the Day, magnified by the Flattery, and exalted by the Acclamations of other Men, many of which Number curse him in their Hearts, and detest him in their Judgments, are not exceedingly allayed by the Agonies of the Night when he is alone, and by the Storm within his own Bowels. His Looks may be haughty and proud, and his Countenance may be fierce and terrible, but they who keep their Eyes fixed upon him, shall discover a melancholy Cloud to cover those big Looks, and nothing like Chearfulness which naturally results from the Contentedness and Serenity of the Mind, to spread it self over his Countenance; he may laugh very loud, but he cannot be merry, which is a Feast reserved only for a good Conscience. On the other side, let the sincere, just, oppress'd and miserable Man as carefully survey his own Condition, whether it be as miserable and as grievous indeed as it seems to be, with-

* Eccl. v. 4.

without administering any Comfort to himself from the Cause of it: If it be Want and Poverty, whether he hath not a better Habit of Health, than he had in a more ample Estate; and Health is a valuable Reparation for the Diminution of Plenty: If it be Imprisonment, whether his Mind be not more free, and the Faculties of his Understanding more enlarged, and more active, than when he had more Liberty: If it be Banishment, whether he lives not in a better Air, finds not more Humanity, more Justice than he could in his own Country, and then his Country is but a Name: Let him remember how much more valuable that is, which his Enemies neither have, nor could take from him, than all that which they have robbed him of: They have taken away his Estate, his Office, which others can quickly take from them; but he hath his Innocence still left, they could not rob him of that, nor of that Peace of Mind which is inseparable from that Innocence: And that they may have the truer Sense of the Value of that Tranquility of Mind, let them but reflect upon that Anxiety and Uneasiness they have laboured under, when their Impatience or Melancholy have tempted them to cancel the Obligations of Conscience, and run into the same Guilt with the other, and whilst they only laboured under that Irresolution; and then upon the Serenity and Joy they found within their own Breasts upon the mastering that Temptation; and they will from thence by a just Computation conclude, that they shall not only be the better hereafter, but that they are for the present greater Men than their Adversaries.

O Lord God, suppress the Power, and restrain the Will of wicked and blasphemous Men to do Mischief, that their Delight and Prevalence in it, may not raise their proud Spirits to a Contempt of thee, and thereupon draw thy Wrath and eternal Destruction upon themselves: Awaken them out of the fatal Dream of their own false Prosperity, or let them dream of what they are to suffer really for that imaginary Prosperity, and awake with the Horror of those Judgments, and repent and renounce all their Sins. Raise the Hearts of those who suffer wrongfully, and because they will not do Wrong; cherish their drooping Spirits, that they faint not in their Tryal, much less repent of their own Virtue; give them for the present a Type of that Joy in their own Breasts, which they shall hereafter enjoy with thee, for their Obedience to thee. Amen.

P S A L M LXXIV.

THERE is no Sin or Wickedness we can commit, which we can so warily limit and circumscribe, that it shall not concern the Honour and Dignity of God himself: We cannot traduce or calumniate a Neighbour, to the Prejudice of his Reputation, to the taking away his good Name; we cannot commit a Trespass upon our Neighbour, to the taking away his Goods, or to the Damage of his Estate, without the Violation of God's Commandment, and the swerving from that Justice which he hath appointed us carefully to observe; and for this he cannot but be grievously offended with us. Yet there are Degrees of Sins too,

in the Excess whereof he finds himself to be more immediately concerned, and by which he is more intolerably provoked. The very not considering him in all our Actions, the putting him out of our Memory, when we are transported by our Passions or our Appetite to Acts of Pride and Revenge, to sacrifice to our Ambition or our Lust, without so much as thinking that he beholds us, or sees our darkeſt Contrivances, is a high undervaluing him, a ſlighting, if not affronting both his Power and his Providence; and if he ſuffers us to ſucceed in what we go about, to bring our wicked Imaginations to paſs, in the Fruition of what we ſo impiouſly deſire, he doth but throw our own Contempt of him back into our own Boſoms, and put us as much out of his Thoughts as we have done him out of ours; which is making us as miſerable as the Malice of our Enemies can wiſh, or the greater Malice of our own Hearts can effect. Yet we can make a more active War upon him; we can aſſault him with Sins of a greater Magnitude, which more immediately concern his Honour, and provoke his Judgment: The blaſpheming his Omnipotence and deſying his Power, the profaning his Temple, and prostituting the Houſe he hath reſerved to himſelf and for his own immediate Service, to unlawful or indeed to ſecular Purpoſes and Uſes, is no leſs than bringing the War into his own Quarters, contemning him to his Face, and bidding him help himſelf if he be able; and the greateſt Mercy we can hope for in theſe Attempts, is, that he will ſuddenly deſtroy us; for if he ſuffers us to ſucceed, that is, to have our Wickedneſs notorious to the World, without any viſible Punishment of our Preſumption, it is ſo terrible a Beginning of his Judgment, that it cannot end but in our eternal Damnation. It were to be wiſhed, how unwary ſoever we are in other Tranſgreſſions, how negligent and inconfiderate ſoever we are in indulging to thoſe Temptations, which by degrees precipitate us into the Practice of Vices very formidable; yet that we carefully watch, even with fear and trembling, the firſt Approaches towards thoſe horrid Impieties from which there is no Redemption. It is better not to ſeek after him than not believe him, not to ſpeak or think of him at all, than to ſpeak negligently of him, and to handle him with the ſame Familiarity as we would do any other Subject of Diſcourſe; than to make Experiments of his ſeeing, and conſidering, and approving what we do, by provoking him with ridiculous and impious Opinions of his not being concerned, and by doing impudently what he hath moſt forbidden us to do, and moſt threatned us for doing; and then conclude, that he doth neither ſee nor conſider, or that he doth approve, becauſe they ſee not the preſent Effect of thoſe Threats, becauſe they are ſuffered to ſurvive thoſe odious Provocations. A little Progreſs in the Liſenſe of Diſcourſe, a Liberty in the reading and talking of Scripture, of raiſing unneceſſary Queſtions, and unuſual and unheard-of Interpretations, though at firſt Appearance of little Importance to the vital Part of Religion, doth frequently introduce an Affectation of doubting in Matters which ought not to be doubted, and an Irreſolution in thoſe very Foundations which ſupport the Chriſtian Faith; and having brought our ſelves to this miſerable Indifferency, and odious Unconcernment, we very eaſily proceed for the Exaltation of our Wit and Fancy, even to deny thoſe very Attributes to God Almighty which he chuſes moſt to adorn himſelf with, and open a Door for the moſt confounding Atheiſm to break in, that ever infeſted the Church of Chriſt. Next to this Preſumption and Irreverence towards

his Person, and even with the same Jealousy, because he will not separate it from his Person, it were to be wished, that we were more circumspect in all Matters of Religion, and in the Practice of it; and the Awe that we ought to have for that Place which he hath more peculiarly designed to the Exercise of it: That we should raise our selves to such a due Veneration of his divine Majesty in all the Offices of Religion, that in the devout Contemplation of them we should find our selves superior to all worldly Consideration and Temptation, and not use our best and sharpest Faculties to draw down Religion to us, and to make it subservient to the vile Ends of our Profit or Ambition, our Pride and our Passion, in making it the Ground and Foundation of our Uncharitableness, Malice and Animosities: We should ponder what it is to cast Fire into the Sanctuary; the Wickedness and Impiety of it, either in burning the Churches, as if they were common Structures, and that God may be served in other Houses as well; they believe he cannot be so well served there as in other Houses, and that they can chuse better for him than he hath done for himself; or in distracting the Congregations which meet there, with doubtful Disputations and Matters which it may be God himself hath reserved to himself, and which therefore ought not so much as to be enquired into, much less determined by us. They who infuse Scruples and Doubts in the Theory of Religion, into the Minds of weak and illiterate Men, cast fire into their Bosoms that they are not able to extinguish; and if they blow and fan this Fire into a Flame, as they usually do, by making unwarrantable and false Determinations of those Scruples or Doubts, and obliging them not to converse with or love, and shortly after to hate all those who say or believe the contrary; do as much as in them lies disappoint God's End in appointing those Congregations, which is for Concord and Unity; and do the worst they can to set God's Sanctuary on Fire, both in the spiritual and temporal Understanding.

As there is this difference in the Method and Quality of our Offences and Sins against God, so there is a great Difference in the Method and Quality of the Punishment God inflicts upon us for those Sins and Offences, in the Degrees of the Afflictions and Calamities he makes us undergo for them. He punishes our Negligences and Incogitances, our want of Thinking upon him, and our want of Confidence in him, by withdrawing the Affections of our Neighbours and Acquaintance from us, and by the Pride and Contempt of our Superiors towards us; our Riots, Luxury and Excesses, by Sickness and Diseases, and depriving us of Health, which we made our selves unworthy of; by throwing it away upon Occasions and Opportunities of our own seeking: He punishes our loose and extravagant Expences, the wasting our Fortunes and Estates, which he gave us to improve our Understandings, and to exercise our Charity, to make our selves and others the better by it, with Want, Poverty, and Imprisonment, which will not fail to make us reflect upon our past Follies and Vanities with Sorrow enough; and our Pride and Ambition to get a Superiority and Power over others, not by Virtue, but by Title, that we may be able to discountenance and oppress wiser and better Men than our selves, and our Endeavour to procure this Preference and Mastery by all the crooked and all the corrupt Means and Applications which we think may contribute to it, by subjecting us to the greater Pride, and more unlimited Ambition of our Equals and Inferiors; and enabling them to exercise a more severe Ty-

ranny upon us than we were ambitious of, and (which is the highest Mortification) humbling and dispiriting us to that Degree, that we are even contented to be subjected to that odious Tyranny. He punishes the Rage of our Lusts, and our delight in the most vicious Debaucheries, the waste and consuming our Strength and Vigor which he indulged to us for the Propagation of a healthy Posterity, and for the advancing all other noble and generous Services, with Decay, Weakness, and Sterility, and reducing that ill employed Strength and Vigor by such insensible Degrees, that there shall be still enough left to foment the Wickedness of the Appetite, without Ability to comply with it, until we find our Feebleness such, that we cannot go or move, when we thought our selves able to walk very well. And if these his so proper Expedients, these his own Applications prove wholesome Remedies, that we do seriously revolve the Nature and Cause of our Diseases, and sadly lament the Effect that flowed from thence, and humbly and heartily implore his Help and Assistance in our Cure and compleat Deliverance; if we enter into those Promises which we are all forward enough to make in such Exigents, and but honestly intend to perform those Promises, his Indulgence is so favourable, his Mercy so great, that he will on a sudden, in less Time than we provoked him, redeem, deliver and repair us. He will be content to receive the vast Debt we owe him in our own small Money, to be paid by Degrees, as we are able; he will accept new Promises in part of Payment, and as long as we do but really endeavour to satisfy, he will not take the forfeiture of our Obligation. Whilst we continue in this good Resolution, if we should be surprized by the Strength of a sudden Temptation to relapse into a pardoned Offence, and miserably swerve from our Covenant made with him, if we do as suddenly recollect our selves, and detest our own Tergiversation, it is possible he may be yet so gracious as not to cast us off, not to leave us to be worried by our Sins, which will not need the Assistance of any other Enemies to destroy us, but may once more trust us, once more ransom us from our Captivity. We have had Experience of this Degree of his Mercy; he hath often practised it, and therefore may be prevailed with again, when he meets with as fit Subjects for it.

But if we affect a higher Garb of Sinning, throw off all Consideration or Thought of him, withdraw avowedly all Desire to please him, and all Fear to offend him; devise and make a new Religion for our selves, and a new Deity to preside in that Religion; question his Providence, doubt his Wisdom, reject his Scripture, or which is as bad, appeal to the Interpretation of it by our Fancy; place our own Reason upon the same Seat, and in the same Chair where he appointed Faith to govern us; when we arrive at this impious Impudence, it is no wonder that we laugh at all Distinctions of Places and Persons, of Sacred and Prophane, contemn and forsake all the Priests and the Prophets, and appoint Men of our own Creed, and of our own Practice, to publish and declare their and our Doctrines and Interpretations; abhor those Places where we were obliged to a Reverence and Subjection to that Faith and that Divinity we are now grown too learned and too wise to submit to. We may very well in this Temper, pull down the Clergy and the Churches together, level the Places and the Persons, and think other Houses fitter for other Preachers; and that every Auditor may teach, they being all qualified and inspired alike. It was no unpolitick Method,

Method, no unreasonable Argumentation used by *Jeroboam*, when he renounced his Allegiance to the King: * *If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the hearts of this people turn again to their Lord, even unto Rehoboam.* Though the People were very angry with their ill-advised King, though his ungracious Reception of their Tender of their Duties to him, and his Threats of worse Treatment towards them, transported and provoked them so far, as to withdraw their Obedience from him, and even to provoke *Jeroboam* to take the Government of them and their Cities upon himself; he easily foresaw, that when they should go up again to the Temple at *Jerusalem*, whither their Religion obliged them to repair, when they should go to Church, and hear the Priests expound the Law of God to them, they would quickly recollect themselves, their Consciences would smite them for withdrawing from their God, by withdrawing from their King. Rebellion never did, never can take deep Root, whilst the Scripture is hearkened to, and the Priests put the People in Mind of those parts of Scripture, and enforce the true Sense thereof upon their Understandings and Consciences. If he did not provide a sure Remedy against this unavoidable Mischief, the People would turn again even to *Rehoboam*, who had used them so very ill. He took therefore good Counsel with those who were most desperately engaged with him, compounded an Antidote that could not fail, in ejecting and expelling such wholesome Poison. He made Two Calves of Gold, provided a Body of new Divinity for them, and then made them more than one House of High-places; they need not with so much Trouble crowd themselves into one Cathedral, they should have Churches enough, where they might with more Ease, and less Expence, worship their Gods, (the very Gods who brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*, he assured them that) and practise their Devotion. Yet this would not serve his Turn; if his Security were not better provided for, his Rebellion, how grateful and pleasant soever for a Time, would not be long-lived. Whilst the Priests and the Prophets preserved their Authority, and the People depended upon their Information and Instruction for their Salvation, it would be as bad as if they all went to *Jerusalem*; they would quickly conjure down that Spirit of Idolatry, and level those high Places with the rest of the Fields. The Sons of *Levi*, consecrated by God for that Service, must down: He casts them off from executing the Priests Office unto the Lord, drives them out of the Country, or totally suppresses their Ministry: And because no Religion could be kept up without Priests and Altars, he made Choice of such of his own Party, who being of the lowest of the People, were like to be most faithful to him by the Preferment, and made them Priests who were willing to be ordained by him, and to ordain as many others as he should direct; and these Men were to sacrifice to his new Gods, to preach the new Divinity in the new Temples he had erected; and so *Jeroboam* finished his Business, as we have done ours, if we follow his Example.

There is no more looking up to Heaven, no more Help to be expected from thence; our repeated Perjuries and Apostacies have shut all Entrance and Doors against us there; we have done our worst to God, and can now only expect to see what he will do to us: And we shall then find that he pours out his most heavy Judgments, and his fullest

Viols

* 1 Kings xii. 27.

Viols of Wrath and Vengeance upon our Heads; when he complies throughly with our own Wishes, and contributes effectually to the Accomplishment of our own Desires. He will gratify us in the Choice of our Religion; and since we have cast that off which he prescribed to us, we shall enjoy that which we have provided for our selves, and which shall generate as many other Religions, as our Reason, to which we have appealed from him, can have Strength to bring out. Let the Priests of their own ordaining cast what Fire they please into the Sanctuary, preach what Blasphemy they please in Churches, and denounce Damnation to those who are not of their Party; and let those who will have no Priests, break down the Churches with their Axes and their Hammers; it is all one to him, to prophane his Name, and conspire against him in his House, or by outward Violence to throw down his Dwelling-place to the Ground; he will suffer all his Churches to be pulled down: And that we may be sure that he will trouble us no more, that he will send no-body to call upon our Consciences, to call upon us, nor leave any Sign that he ever took Care of us, and finally, that we may not fail of Success in all we propose, he will leave us without the Importunity of the Clergy we have so much contemned, and suffer us to be without a Priest or Bishop in the Land, and withdraw all farther Thoughts of us, and leave the compleating our Happiness to the Omnipotence of that Reason, under whose Banner we have so long triumphed. What can we look for, but such a Retaliation from the Justice and Indignation of God Almighty? And what can all his Anger and Indignation bring worse upon us? In all the Afflictions he brought upon his own beloved Nation for their Wickedness and Idolatry, and after he found that Afflictions would do them no good (as we are upon a Precipice, when his sharp Chastisements make no Impression upon us) he gave them entirely up into the Hands of their most cruel Enemies, suffered them to be carried into Captivity, to be dispossessed of their own Native Country, where they had rejected their God who had wrought such Wonders for them, to be Slaves to Masters who would better curb their rebellious Natures, and would sooner call to their Memories the blessed Condition they had fallen from, by the Despair they had before their Eyes ever to return to it again: Yet even in these Captivities (at least in some of them) he left some Prophets amongst them; Prophets who for their Sins were led into Captivity with them, and by being so, kept up the Name of God among them, some faint Memory of what he had been to them, and what they were to him; and so by cultivating those Affections which had any Warmth left in them, or were capable of any, by degrees produced in them a Sense of feeling and discerning the Heighth from which they were fallen, and the Depth of Misery into which they were cast. It is a kind of Preface to Health to know how sick we are, and to be willing to take the Remedies prescribed for our Recovery. These faithful Remembrancers by degrees humbled them to a Capacity of being delivered, and then raised their Spirits to hope for it; made them first acknowledge their wicked Ingratitude to God, and how unworthy they were that he should ever so much as think of them again, and then interpose with him on their Behalf, mediate with him for their Pardon; put him in Mind of what he had before done for them; that they were but the Work of his own Hands, and that it would not be for his Honour utterly to destroy them; that it was time to shew them the Light of his Countenance;

that how wicked soever they were, they were not more impious than they whose Slaves they were, and to whose Subjection he had submitted them: Lastly, As an Argument the most pathetic they could devise, that if he would not withdraw his Hand from helping their Enemies, nay, if he would not extend his Arm for their Relief, if the Nation were totally eradicated, there would be no Memorial preserved of all his Loving-kindness, they and his Records would perish together, and so he should be without the noblest Monument he had ever erected of his Power and of his Patience, of his being God Almighty, and of his being the most Merciful Father, from his Creation of the World. And this Importunity and this Address prevailed at last, and even extorted from him a Purpose and Resolution to deliver them, and then a Sign that he would do so, and sometimes of the Time and Season when he would do it. Whilst we have a Priest and a Prophet left amongst us, our Condition is not utterly desperate.

There was indeed one Captivity, and but one, (under *Antiochus*) when there was neither Temple, nor Priest, nor Prophet left to them, and they could then receive no Sign for their Deliverance: And there are some very learned Men, who believe that *David* composed this Psalm in Contemplation, by his Prophetick Spirit, of that desolate Time; because, as is said before, they were never without a Prophet in any of the other Captivities. Such a Captivity, and such a Desolation and Desertion, we have Reason to expect and tremble at. It is very agreeable to the Justice and the Method of God Almighty, to suffer us to be broken in Pieces with many Religions, because we would not be united by one; to suffer us to be without Churches, which we have so much profaned, and without Priests, whom we have sottishly contemned and reviled. Let the Miseries we suffer, and the Burthens we undergo be never so intolerable, when the Oppressors and the Oppressed are equally impious, when they who are without the Churches endeavour to pull and beat them down, utterly to demolish them, and they who are within do as much conspire against him, and exclude him from being served in them; when they who complain of both these, and would be protected and delivered from both, do equally dishonour him in their Lives, and condemn him in their Actions, so that he hath no other Election than which abominable Sins and abominable Sinners he will prefer before the other; we can only look that he will chuse to let us execute his and our own Vengeance upon each other, and to and in each others Confusion; and that we shall all be without Church or Prophet, or Priest, which we have all desired to be rid of, or have so little regarded or esteemed.

O God, if it be not yet thy Pleasure to redeem us from the Power and Malice of our Enemies, and our poor Nation and Country from the Misery they languish under; if we have not yet undergone enough, because we have not yet paid the Price of our Redemption by any true Contrition, and hearty Remorse for offending thee; O give us Grace patiently to submit to thy Pleasure, and rather do thou increase our Misery and Sufferings, than suffer us to increase our Sins. Let us never imagine that these Afflictions could befall us, if they were not inflicted by thee; and that they can be removed from us, or we freed from them by any other Hand than thine; and less doubt that thou canst deliver us when thou thinkest fit, which will

will be when we are fit for thy Deliverance, In the mean time, make us assured that we can never be fit for that Blessing, or capable of it, whilst we are as wicked as our Enemies; whilst we only differ from them in chusing other Sins, in which we are more delighted, and which are equally dishonourable as those which are practised by them. Guard and defend us, we beseech thee, from those heinous and crying Sins of Profaneness, Blasphemy and Sacrilege; from Contempt of thy Word, of thy Church, and of thy Priests and Prophets, which must draw down such thy Judgments upon us, as thou wilt never reverse. Let us never provoke thee so far, as to cast off thy Altar, and abhor thy Sanctuary, to despise in the Indignation of thy Anger the King and the Priest; but mortify us so thoroughly with thy other Judgments, make us so much better than our Enemies, that thou mayst think fit to prefer us before them; and even for thy own Sake, and for the Preservation and Propagation of thy own Honour, and the Conversion of Millions of Souls to thy Service, put an end to their Tyranny and our Oppression. Amen.

PSALM LXXV.

THERE are few Psalms upon which learned Men differ more in their Opinions, than they do upon this, both with Reference to the Matter it self, and the Persons to which it refers: Some take it to refer only to the Person of *David* himself, and to the Reformation he would work by his exemplary and impartial Justice he would administer when he should come to be King, and the Government should be vested in him. Others conceiving some Expressions to be in it of Power and Sovereignty which *David* knew was not comprehended within his Commission, believe it to be as it were a Dialogue between God himself, the Prophet, and the just innocent Man, and that it relates wholly to the last Day, to the Day of Judgment; and if we consider it with that Piety and Animadversion we ought to do in either of those Senses, we shall be much the better and the happier Men whilst we live in this World, and the better prepared to expect the last Judgment Day, and to appear in it with the less Consternation.

As Kings are God's Deputies and Vicegerents upon Earth, and so invested with all the Dignity and in all the Power he thinks fit to put out of his own Hands; so they are entrusted by him, by the Wisdom and Integrity of their Government and Example, and by the Impartiality and Severity of their Justice, to prepare and provide for his own Appearance in his great and terrible Day, to make his own Work of that Day the easier, that he may have the less to do; for no doubt God will use much the less Severity at the Day of Judgment, as Kings and Princes use the Authority he hath given them, in the restraining and Punishment of Vice and Wickedness before that Day. * *What manner of man the ruler of a city is, such are all they that dwell therein*, says the Son of *Syrach*,. It is so much more in a Kingdom; the King's living Law, his Example, and his dead Laws enlivened by his Spirit and Vigilance, and executed with his Severity, bring Virtue into Reputation, and

* Eccl. x. 2.

put Vice out of Countenance; in a short Time expel and eradicate all crying and confounding Wickedness out of a Nation, or at least drive it into Corners, make it lurk in the Dark, and not dare to shew its Face, which is a great allaying of the Venom of it. Sin may propagate it self in secret Places, and Sinners may disguise themselves, and do the more Harm, scatter their Poyson the more successfully abroad, by their not being known; but there will be no proud and presumptuous Sinners, none that will lift their Horn on high, who will own and profess, and justify the Sins they act. The Courage and Virtue of Kings will level those high Persons to their low Crimes, and make the one as much contemned as the other is hated; they will never appear in Court, never in Offices, and if it be without Honour, it will quickly be without Life. It is not the fertile Nature of Vice that makes it spread, but the Sunshine in which it is planted, the Countenance that is given to it, that gives it Power to do more Mischief; if it doth not flourish by others, it will die of it self. *Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.* If Princes would industriously and majestically suppress haughty and impetuous Transgressors, suffer none of them to come into their Presence, their inferior Servants, who are trusted by them in the Execution of their Laws, would quickly reform or extirpate inferior Delinquents, and even sweep the Vices out of the Nations; and God would recompence those Kings for the Service they do him, in providing so well for their own Security, by establishing them so firmly that they should never be shaken: When other Monarchies and Empires shall be dissolved by the Injustice, Luxury and Impiety that covers their Land, the Pillars of their Government shall be born up, there shall be no sinking in Strength or Reputation, they shall live gloriously and triumphantly, die contentedly and chearfully, and be succeeded by those of their own Race, and their Subjects shall lament their Loss, and reverence their Memories, not only as the Authors of their Prosperity, but even as the Means of their Salvation.

If it be then so much in the Power of Kings to reform and new create their Subjects, to establish their own Security and Greatness, and to do God himself so great and so acceptable Service, it would be very well worth their considering, what Account they shall be able to make for themselves, for not performing this Work that was so easy for them to do; and how melancholy soever the serious Consideration is like to be, to reflect whether that Superiority they have enjoyed over others, and their Exemptions from other Jurisdictions and Inquisitions, doth not make them the more liable to the Rigor of the last Tribunal; and whether the Crowd and Multitude of Sinners which must attend the Judgment of that dismal Day, is not like to be imputed to their Negligence and Remissness at least, if not to their Wickedness and Example; and then their Superiority hath been purchased at too dear a Price, when it shall be continued only in a Superiority of Punishment and Misery above what their Vassals, betrayed by their not having done their Duty, shall be exercised with; now their Ambition is at an End, and they are ashamed and grieved that they ever suffered themselves to be transported with it, their high Condition shall be still preserved to them in a Height of Torment and Lamentation, and all those Preferences which are reserved till that Day, for the most signal and glorious Offenders. They shall be tried and judged in the same Method, and by

the same Rules as have been practised by them in their own Courts. If they have been betrayed by their Privy-Council, their Secrets discovered by them, and thereby their Designs miscarried; their Crimes are of another Nature, and their Punishment in another Degree, by reason of the high Trust that was reposed in them, than if the same Mischief had fallen out by the Infidelity of an ordinary Servant, by the Treachery of an Eves-dropper, who by a sawcy Curiosity, comes to know somewhat he should not have been trusted with. If they are impoverished in their Fortunes by the Negligence or Perfidiousness of the Officers of their Revenue, the Governors of their Treasury, in not taking Care that their Rents and Dues be carefully collected and paid into their Receipt, or suffering it to be wasted or misapplied after it is paid in; such Persons are much more in Fault, and must undergo a sharper and more severe Chastisement for such an odious Breach of Trust than common Men, who do not pay what they owe, and too often conceal what they know is due to their Prince, and reserve that to themselves which should be paid to him. They who are trusted with the Guard of the Person of the King, are more immediately to answer for the Dignity and Security of that Sacred Person, that the Reverence due to him be not violated by the rude Approach and Intrusion of mean and ordinary People into his Presence, and that his Safety be not endangered by any Attempt of bolder and more impious Persons; and if a Prince be exposed to such Affronts, or suffers by such Attempts, those Officers are sure to answer it with the loss of their Fortunes, sometimes of their Lives, under a more severe Scrutiny than any of the Multitude who were more immediately guilty of the Crimes. Kings are God Almighty's Privy-Counsellors, to whom he communicates his Secrets, his Rules of Government, inspires them with Wisdom to do Justice to their People, and infuses such an Awe and Reverence into the Affections and Hearts of their Subjects towards their Persons, that Millions of Men resign themselves to the Obedience of one single Person, because he is trusted by God to rule over them, and therefore must not be disobedient to him, how unkind or unjust soever he is to them: If they have not exercised this Government which he put into their Hands, but suffered the People to govern themselves, to follow their own Appetites and Passions; if they have not improved them in Virtue, and restrained them from Vice; if instead of administering Justice between them, and upon them, they suffer them to make a Prey of one another, the stronger to oppress the weaker, that he may make a Prey of them all himself; if they suffer their Subjects every Man to do what seems good in his own Eyes, as if they had no King to rule over them, they have proved very treacherous Counsellors, betrayed the Honour of their Master, in prostituting their own, and have planted those Thorns and Bryars, and cherished those Weeds which they neglected to pull up; and the unprofitableness of the Soil is the natural Effect of their ill Husbandry. They are God's Officers of his Revenue, the Ministers of his Treasury, trusted by him to see his Tribute of Praise and Thanksgiving constantly and punctually paid to him by all their Subjects, to make them perform the Vows they have made to him, and pay the Obligations they have sealed to him; to compel them to live as good Christians in the Exercise of those Virtues which are inseparable from Christianity, and a full Harvest whereof is his most beloved Revenue: If instead of auditing these Accounts, and exacting these Receipts, they suffer all those Rents

to run in Arrear, no Devotion to be paid to Heaven at all, or such, so negligently, so indecently, as is worse than none: If they forget the high and transcendent Obligation that is upon them to be Nursing-Fathers and Nursing-Mothers to the Church, till that precious Soil be overrun with the most unwholsome and poisonous Weeds, the Church infected with Schisms and Heresies, till all the real and substantial Practice of Religion is totally neglected; they themselves must pass another kind of Inquisition than those ordinary Transgressors who have laboured to improve all those Impieties and Confusions under their Conivance, and for want of their Diligence and Animadversion. In a word, Kings are God's Captains of his own Guards, trusted with the Charge of his own Person, to preserve his Divinity from being invaded and trampled upon, and to secure his Deity from being affronted: This is a Province committed wholly to them, to whom he hath imparted some of his own Majesty, to make them the more sensible of his, and cannot be managed by inferior Persons, how piously soever affected: If besides the neglect of his Worship, and the disobeying his Commandments, besides thinking seldom of him, and not reverently enough when they do think of him, they shall suffer Men to doubt of their own Creation and Redemption, that they more reasonably may question his Power and Omnipotence in both; argue and dispute against the Existence of Heaven and Hell, because they are sure never to go to the one, and cannot avoid the other, but by there being no such Place; arraign the Day of Judgment it self, by limiting the Proportion and Extent of his Punishments, and the Time and Duration of it, by their Rules and Determinations in Philosophy of Infinite and Eternal, what Declaration soever he hath made of either by his own Word in his Scriptures: This is the highest Breach of Trust and Treachery that can be committed, the putting his own Guards under the Command of his greatest Enemies, and submitting as much as in them lies his supreme Honour and Dignity to the rude Scorn and Insolence of Infidelity and Atheism; and they cannot but expect a greater Measure of God's Wrath, and Fury, and Indignation to be poured out upon them, than upon the Heads of the foulest of Murtherers, the lewdest of Rebels, and the most profane and sacrilegious Blasphemers that ever inhabited the Earth; and that the worst part of their Wickedness shall be imputed and transferred to the dismal Account of the others.

The Contemplation then of the Power and Justice of Kings, if it be perverted or eclipsed by their own Wickedness and Remissness, or violated and oppressed by the License and Rebellion of ungodly Subjects, or contemned by a general Combination not to submit to their Laws, will not be enough to restrain us in the Paths of Righteousness, and extinguish all inordinate Appetites and Desires; it will be the safest Prescription we can recommend to our selves, to have constantly before our Eyes, and in our Sight, the Image and Prospect of the last and terrible Day, when all our secret Actions, Actions that the most severe and jealous Eyes of Princes, how piercing soever, could never discover; and when our more dark Thoughts, Thoughts which no mortal Eye but our own could discern more than they can what lies concealed in the Foundation of the Earth, shall be as visible as our Persons, and more transparent than what is inclosed within the finest Glass; and this not only to the all-knowing Spirit of God himself, and his Angels, but made equally so to all the World that is there to be judged; that they

who knew us in this World may see us without a Mask, plainly and manifestly discern our Dissimulation and Hypocrisy, and how far we were from being in Truth the Men we pretended to be, and bring in their Accusation and Verdict accordingly. Though we are without the Sense of any Pleasure and Delight in doing our Duty, and complying to the utmost of our Power and Endeavours with those Obligations which divine Providence hath imposed upon us, (which to all pious and religious Hearts is Matter of Joy unexpressible,) yet the Terror of that Prospect, and the trembling which must naturally accompany that Consideration, cannot but keep us awake, that we be not surprized by the strongest and most powerful Temptation, and restrain us from committing a Sin which we have most courted and set our Hearts upon, and even in a longed-for Season, when Opportunity it self invites us to it. How is it possible that we can suffer our selves to be intoxicated with Ambition, and an impatient Desire of Preferment, if we have a lively Representation before us of the Temptations we submit to by enjoying that Preferment, how innocently so ever attained, if it can be innocent when ambitiously coveted, and of the heavy Penalties we are liable to, by any Faults and Errors we commit in or by Reason of that Preferment? Sure no Man would indulge to himself the short Pleasure of one Hour, if he foresaw that by and for that short Delight, he should not only be deprived of all Pleasure during his whole Life, but that his Life should hold and continue to a great Age, in a far greater Degree of Pain and Torment than his beloved Sin seemed to have of Delight when he enjoyed it. How momentary then is the Pleasure of a Life, compar'd with that Eternity that must follow; and how disproportionable are the Pains which are endured in this and the other World? If the Justice or Injustice of Princes showers down Afflictions upon us, if they take away our Estates, and their Indignation adds to that Oppression Imprisonment and Torment, the very Change and Variety of Punishment would in some degree refresh our Spirits, and enable us to endure the worst: Nay, if God himself exercises us with Judgments of his own sending in this World, though the Wine be Red, it is full of Mixture, it hath still somewhat in it that may warm our frozen Heart, and even refresh our fainting Spirits; but the Dregs of that Wine is reserved for the last terrible Day, when it shall be wrung out, and made our Draught, the Fire and Poison whereof shall for ever rage in our Veins, and torment our Bones. It is not possible for the most reprobated Sinner to believe that there will ever be such a Day, how long soever it will be before it comes, and stedfastly revolve what his Part must be upon that Day, and his Portion for ever after, but he will abhor and detest his Sins as much as he doth the Punishment; and with his own Hands pull those Strings from his Heart which have conveyed any sort of Wickedness thither; especially when he views the Reverse of that Day, and the Business on the other Side of that glorious Tribunal, which is to raise and exalt the Hearts of those who have been dejected and broken with his Chastisements. to a degree of Joy and Gladness that can be no more described than it can be determined; to supply the Wants and Miseries of those who have been oppressed and spoiled by proud and prosperous Transgressors, for their Integrity and Innocence, with such a Measure of Prosperity and Plenty, as can never be wasted or diminished; and lastly, to recompence and reward all those, who out of Conscience of their Duty to him, and for fear of his Displeasure, have

have submitted to Reproaches and Dishonours, and the highest Insolencies of Men, with such transcendent Honour and Preferment, as shall make them conspicuous, and to shine with Lustre in Heaven it self. And we may warrantably believe, that it would be much more agreeable to the Nature and Compassion of Almighty God, to spend that whole Session in such Distributions, if the affected and malicious Wickedness of Mankind would have permitted him, than any Part of it in condemning so many miserable Wretches to the Place which they well knew was provided and kept for them from the Beginning.

O Lord God, who desirest not the Death of a Sinner, even after he hath broken those thy Commandments which should have restrained him from Sin, make such Impressions in our Hearts by thy Grace, that we may abhor our selves for having offended thee, and detest those Sins which so basely corrupted us. Infuse into the Hearts of all Kings such an Acknowledgment of, and such a Reverence for thy Almighty Power, that they may look upon themselves as trusted by thee to preserve their Subjects not only from Injustice and Oppression, but from Sin it self, and even from thy Wrath, by their own great Examples in their virtuous and pious Lives, by their perfect Detestation of all Wickedness, and all wicked Men, and by their severe Chastisement of all proud Offenders, who will neither follow their pious Examples, nor conform to their excellent Precepts; so that their Subjects may enjoy a Heaven upon Earth under their righteous Government, and with Confidence attend to be admitted both Prince and People into thy other Heaven at the last Day. However, gracious Father, let the Expectation of that Day be always upon our Hearts, and before our Eyes, to keep us from evil Thoughts, at least from evil Actions: If thou dost suffer us to slip, uphold us from falling, and let not any proud and presumptuous Sin get the Dominion over us, that those Dregs may never be wrung out into that Cup, which must be our Portion to drink of, for his Sake who drank a bitter Portion on our Behalf, and to free us from everlasting Perdition, thy own dear Son, our Redeemer. Amen.

P S A L M LXXVI.

*S*INCE there hath been any Religion professed or pretended in the World, there hath been always some Place assigned for the Exercise of that Religion; and God himself had no sooner designed and appointed particular Devotion to be paid to him by Mankind, than he likewise appointed Places for that Devotion to be celebrated in, where he would be most assuredly found, and most effectually be supplicated to. Altars were erected and maintained by his Prescription, for the Records and Monuments of his signal Blessings and Deliverances; and when he vouchsafed to prescribe a more solemn Method of his own Service, at the same Time he directed his own Tabernacle, his own Ark to be erected, for the more immediate Application of the People, and his own more immediate Residence: He thought it no Diminution of his Greatness, no Limitation to, or Restraint of his Universality, to dwell

in one Place. God no doubt is every where, and we ought to serve him in all Places, offend him in none; nor can we so restrain our Devotions, and confine them to any one Place, how peculiarly soever set aside (even by himself) for that Purpose. We may justly fear that they who never pray to God but in the Church, do not think of him there, nor indeed are fit to come thither; there goes so much of the Heart to the making a Prayer, though it be made to a Man's Hand, that the repeating so many Words digested into the Form of a Prayer, is no more praying to God Almighty than dreaming over the same Words in our Sleep would be an Act of Devotion. A pious Man prepares and fits himself by his private Supplications in his Closet, to make his Addresses and pour out his Devotions in the Church with the more Confidence and Assurance; and we may reasonably believe, that they who do not make those Preparations, prepare the Divine Providence to hear them when they come there, religiously consider the Sanctity of the Place whilst they are going thither, go rather as to a Place of Meeting, and to comply with civil Obligations, than to the Temple of the most High, and to reconcile themselves to him. The Church is God's Palace, where he keeps his Court, and resides in his full Majesty; where he receives Petitions, and grants them, and executes his Grants at once; a Man asks, and finds himself in Possession of what he asks for, by the Time he hath done asking. Princes often do receive Addresses and Petitions at their Back-Stairs, in their private Lodgings; but Suiters find a great Difference between the Graces and the Dispatches they receive there, and those which are made when all their Ministers and Officers are present, when no new Delays can be interposed: So there is no question God gratifies the most private Address that is made to him, our Closet Devotions, nay, every pious Ejaculation from a repentant Heart, whensoever or wheresoever it be breathed out to him, with some Blessing and Deliverance; but it is not so compleat, so notorious, so publick, as upon Supplications made to him in his Court, in his Temple. It is a bold and unwarrantable Presumption, to give a Preference to any one single Deliverance which God vouchsafed to his own chosen People, when there were so many of them of so stupendious a Nature, that we have no other Comprehension of the way of bringing them to pass, than that they were acted by the Power of his own Almighty Arm: Yet we may piously weigh and consider the Circumstances of any one of them, so far as to raise our Spirits to a higher Veneration of one than of another: A Man is very excusable, who is so far transported with the Contemplation of the Deliverance of *Hezekiah* and *Jerusalem* from the Army of *Senacherib*, as considering the Season and the Circumstances, to believe that no other exceeded; and the way of obtaining it is very remarkable: *Hezekiah's* Dependance upon, and Confidence in God was well known, and he had great Experience of his Goodness upon his most retired and solitary Applications, yet when he heard of the Approach of the *Assyrian* devouring Army against him, which had reduced all the Neighbour Kings and Nations into Servitude, and came to finish its Triumphs in the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, he relied not upon his private Intercessions, upon his Closet Devotions, but rent his Cloaths, threw off his glorious Robes of Majesty, and covered himself with Sackcloth, performed all those Acts of Humility and Mortification, and Repentance, which might make him the fitter Object of that Mercy he implored, and stood in Need

of; and then he went into the House of the Lord, there and there only he expected to be heard, and to find Relief: When he received that insolent blasphemous Letter, that derided and threatned the King, and defied God himself, he went presently into the House of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord; let him read it, and consider it, and against whom those Reproaches were directed: There it was that God resolved to send a Blast upon him; and from thence an Angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the Camp of the *Assyrians* an Hundred Fourscore and Five Thousand: Never such a Deliverance, such a Victory was obtained by any other Prayers than what were poured out in the Temple of the Lord, in God's own House: And some learned Men have been of Opinion, that this Psalm was composed upon the visional Deliberation of the Defeat of that Army which was to be in the Time of *Hezekiah*.

How the fantastick Madnes in Religion comes to possess the Hearts of Men, that it is a Diminution and Circumscription of the Divine and Heavenly Majesty, to suppose him to be more present and propitious to our Devotion in Churches, than in any other Places; nay, that he is more pleased to be served and prayed to in any other Place than in Churches, is worthy of the utmost Diligence of Christian Princes to enquire into and reform, as being an unreasonable Affectation of Novelty and Singularity, that will shake their Civil as well as their Ecclesiastical Government. Pious and godly Men will not suffer themselves to be infected with such a Leprosy, which deprives them of the most precious Legacy Christ hath bequeathed unto his Church, which is the Peace and Unity of Christian Congregations, which can never be preserved without publick Places dedicated to, and preserved for his particular Worship. Whilst we are so sollicitous and curious to provide Habitations for our selves for Ornament as well as Use, and particular Rooms in those Habitations for our own better Accommodation, and the more decent Reception of those who come to visit us; let us not think that God will be contented to be received and entertained any where, and in any Manner, and pay our Devotions to him in a Room worse accommodated than any other we go into. Let us think of him always, and magnify him in our Hearts in all Places, but let us repair to his own House, the Church, consecrated to his Service, and adorned for his Service, with more Joy, and with more Veneration and Confidence of being heard by him: How negligent soever we are in other Places, and how little soever we think of what we say in other Seasons, let us look upon our selves as under another Obligation there; that all our Thoughts be sober towards him, and all our Vows and Promises made to him there be so sincere, that we never fail of performing them. How merciful soever he is to our frequent Relapses and Forfeitures of our Word and Credit, he forgets not, nor easily pardons the Breach of what we undertake with so much Solemnity.

O God, all we can say of thee, of thy Greatness, and of thy Power to bring miserable and presumptuous Men to Confusion and Destruction by ways they cannot dream of, is so much too little and short in comprehending what we would say, that we must endeavour the best we can to conceive it, and not endeavour to express it: Thou, who against all the Rage and furious Attempts of wicked and sacrilegious Persons, hast yet preserved thy own Houses, our consecrated Churches,

Churches, for our pouring out our Supplications before thee; O be always present, and propitious to all the Complaints and Petitions we offer unto thee there; and inspire those our Devotions with such a Fervor and Awe of thee, that they may be worthy of the Place we present them in, and may make us worthy of thy Protection and Deliverance. Amen.

P S A L M LXXVII.

THERE is not any one Thing more desirable, or more to be laboured and endeavoured throughout the whole Life of a Christian, and which we ought more to solicit God for in our constant Prayers (for without his immediate Grace all our Labours and Endeavours will little avail us) than that he will keep us from Despair upon the Severity of his Judgments, and from Presumption upon the Multitude of his Mercies; that our Sins may not weigh us down, and that our Iniquities may not lift up themselves; either Extreme is a Disease very mortal to a Christian Constitution, except speedy Antidotes be applied, and is much easier prevented in the Approach, than cured after the Progress. Yet I know not how it comes to pass, we are so much more inclined to the one than to the other, so much apter to be exalted by any gracious Aspect of Providence towards us, so much disposed to reach and lay hold of the least Twig of Prosperity and good Success, to exalt and extol our selves, that there appears little Danger of our being too much cast down with the Apprehension of his Displeasure, much less of abandoning our selves out of Despair of his Mercy. Indeed, how terrible a Thing soever Despair is, it is so much more commendable, more rational than Presumption, that rather than to be involved in the Folly and Madness of the latter, we may piously wish to be exposed to the very Brink of the former (for the Gulph it self of Despair is so very deep, that there is no Passage through it) and by that hard and uneasy Cure, to extinguish all possible Inclination or Temptation of the other. And we have many Examples of God's Goodness and Compassion, in his having vouchsafed to buoy Men up, and to redeem them from the deepest Agonies, which the Conscience of their own Sins, and the Terror of his Judgments had cast them into; but we have very rarely found an overweening and imperious Transgressor, one who presumes that he shall prosper because he hath prospered, and that God will never forsake him because he hath yet preserved him, reduced to such a Modesty, as must make Providence propitious; but at last overwhelmed in the highest Misery, by the Height of his own Confidence. Despair, though the Branches thereof spread too far, and grow too much downward, hath its Root originally from the awful Reverence and Veneration of the Greatness and Majesty of God, and the Contemplation of our own vile Unworthiness, from the Terror of his Justice, and Detestation of Iniquity, and the Conscience of our Wickedness and Provocation against him; and if the Fear and Apprehension of his Justice so far breaks and depresses our Spirits, that we dare not look up to his Mercy, it is not because we believe he cannot, but have too much Cause to think that he will not help us; and sure the most melancholy Extent of this black Passion. hath often been attended with such Compassion from

God Almighty, that Men have been relieved in that Darkness, by very bright and shining Instances of his Favour upon them. But Presumption is the haughty Issue of our own Pride, and the Estimation of our own Parts and Faculties; and if we are contented to impute the Happiness and Prosperity we enjoy to divine Providence, and the Blessings which God is pleased to pour down upon us, we are still willing to believe or imagine that he discovered some extraordinary Merit in us above what is in other Men, and therefore chose and preferred us to confer his Blessings upon before other Men: Pretend what we will of acknowledging all to him, (and God had rather we acknowledged nothing to him, than not all) a full Value of our selves lies at the bottom of our Hearts. If he hath given us a Competency of Discretion and Foresight to form any probable Design and Counsel, and blesses that Counsel afterwards with extraordinary Success, we cannot be so impudent in our full blown Pride, as not publickly to impute (what the Flattery both of Friends and Enemies is still forward enough to impute to us,) all to God's wonderful Goodness, and to the Work of his own Hand; and yet in the loudest of those our Acknowledgments and Confessions, there is yet a lurking Spirit within us, that applauds our own Wisdom and Virtue, as joint Sharers with him in the Work; and we are very well content that other Men should give the whole Praise to us, to our Wit in contriving, and to our Dexterity in conducting it; referring nothing to Heaven, but its permitting good Effects to result from excellent Causes, and that he suffered good Success to attend rational Undertakings; though the Success hath been so wonderful, so much exceeded the Imagination of the proudest Undertakers, that they cannot pretend to have had any Measures of what is fallen out in their View. This is such a Sawciness of Mind, such a robbing God Almighty of his Due, that we may as well assume the End as the Beginning, the Whole as any Part of it, as the Effect of our own Insight and Policy. If we do not look upon every sober Thought which hath entred into our Heart, as sent thither immediately by him; upon our being present (how casually soever) at any good and commendable Action as an Opportunity given us by him, and our Concurrence in such an Action; as an Infusion of his Grace to make us the more capable of his future Favours; and so every Advance we make in Virtue, Wisdom and Understanding to be as much, as entirely his Work, as the most happy, and most unexpected Conclusion of our utmost Endeavours, he will never consider us as humble and thankful Magnifiers of his Kindness, but as presumptuous Rivals in all the good he can do for us; and we must expect that he will, by disappointing all our Inventions, how reasonable soever, and suffering weaker Men to prevail against us, convince us of our own Folly, and how sottish all our Imaginations and Projections are, which are not infused and conducted by his Wisdom.

It may be there is no Season in which we are more carefully to watch that this poison of Presumption doth not insinuate it self into us, than when we think our selves most secure from it, when we have most humbly resigned all our Thoughts, and all our Actions, to be disposed of by the good Will of God; or when we are most transported with a true and lively Sense of some extraordinary Blessing he hath conferred upon us, or some wonderful Deliverance he hath vouchsafed to work for us; even in the warmth and heat of this Devotion, this luxuriant Weed of Presumption is too apt to take Root, and spring up in our Hearts; and

in the Likeness of a just and reasonable Confidence in him, to grow insensibly into a vain and unreasonable Presumption upon him, into an unwarrantable Belief that he will never forsake us. No Man is so brutal as to believe that he can accomplish any great Design by his own Wit and Skill, and Power, against the Will, and in spite of God Almighty: How little soever he thinks of him in all his Actions, or believes that he takes Notice of what he does, it is not in his Power to think, (if he thinks at all) that he could not disappoint his Success. Few Men have atchieved notably what they proposed to themselves, brought that to pass which they had set their Hearts upon, but they have observed in several Circumstances the unusual Blindness or Unskilfulness of those who opposed them; as if they had conspired with them in their having advanced farther upon an Attempt than they hoped, or durst wish to have done: So that the immediate Hand of God appeared for them, and compassed their End, and they are forward enough to acknowledge it, though not out of a true Sense of Piety as they ought to do, yet out of very Vanity, that they may be the more esteemed by Men. The Heathens themselves looked upon those with extraordinary Esteem, who they thought were favoured by the Gods; and who doth not prosecute that Man with Application and Reverence, who he believes is in the immediate Care and Protection of divine Providence? Yet in both these Cases, Men do not enough think upon God, enough consider him, to be said to presume upon him: When they are overtaken with a Success, they cannot chuse (for the Reasons aforesaid) but mention him, talk of him, when they never thought of him when the Work was doing: This is too slight and too perfunctory an entertaining God Almighty, to introduce a Presumption upon him; there must be a full Confession of his Activity and his Power, and an Opinion and some Evidence of his Good-will and Kindness, before Presumption can take Root. A Man may be confident of the Bounty and Generosity of a Man of whom he hath only heard, upon and by the Report of other Men; but a Man cannot reasonably and properly presume upon the Bounty of any Man, but of him of the Largeness of whose Heart he hath had some Experience. We must not only have a Sense of the repeated Blessings God hath conferred upon us, but Piety enough to confess and acknowledge it, before we are in Danger too much to presume upon it: And it is great Pity, that after such a serious Recollection and Reflexion, we should be inclined to such an odious Transgression and Provocation of him: And yet if it were otherwise, there would be such a perpetual Current of Happiness follow, and attend those upon whom God hath once signally poured out his Favour, that there would be no Discontinuance, at least no Reversal of any of those Blessings; they who Yesterday prevailed over their Enemies, and put them to a shameful Flight, would not to-Morrow be given up a Prey to them, and made a Sacrifice to their Malice, and to their Pride: If we received Favours with the same Spirit we pray for them, and kept our selves as fit and worthy of them after the receiving them, as we appeared to be before, the Continuance of them would be lasting, and we should not be overtaken by Relapses. God was never weary of giving, nor is inclined to change the Object of his Bounty, till we are less solicitous to receive, and make our selves less worthy to receive. We are easily exalted with the Mercies he hath poured out upon us, and think the Proportion so great that we shall stand in Need of no more, but upon that

Stock can do the rest for our selves; and so what we have obtained by great Appearance and Pretence of Humility and Mortification, we forfeit, and even drive from us by Insolence, and the Manifestation of our Pride. We do confess that God hath so often, and by so many several ways preserved us when we saw no Hope before us, and recovered and redeemed us when we were past Hope, and even lost under the Tyranny of our Enemies; and therefore we think we cannot gratify him better, than so wholly to depend upon him, as to take no farther Care of our selves: We look upon him as having made his Election; and that after having so eminently preferred us before our Enemies, he hath upon the Matter foreclosed his own Judgment, and cannot withdraw his Protection from us; and by these Degrees we discontinue those Addresses which first inclined him, lessen that Devotion that confirmed him, grow less wary of what we say or do to him, and less sensible of what he doth to or for us, and so rest secure in a foolish and stupid Presumption that he will do as he hath done, not suffer us to perish, because he hath hitherto preserved us; and it will be no Wonder, if being thus provoked, he makes more Haste to deprive us of all those Benefits he hath given us, than he did to confer them upon us, and leaves us as compleatly miserable as he found us when we first called to him for his Help.

Since then it is so difficult a Thing to steer this weak Vessel in which we make our Voyage of this Life, that we may neither be broken in Pieces upon the dismal Rocks of Despair, nor tossed and overwhelmed by the high and unruly Billows of Presumption; since it is harder for us to retain God's Favour, when he hath vouchsafed it in some Measure to us, than at first to obtain it, because he expects then more from us, and we are apt to render less, it concerns us exceedingly to dispose our selves to such a Temper, as may be most likely to prevail upon his compassionate Nature to relieve us, and not provoke his jealous Nature to withdraw that Relief again from us: That we possess our Spirits with a much greater Proportion of Fear than of Hope, by how much our Nature is more inclined to be exalted than depressed. Though in the Enterprizes of this World, too much Fear produces much Mischief, and betrays those Succours which Reason offers; yet in our Approaches to God Almighty, in our Addresses to him for Protection and Deliverance out of any great Calamity; nay, after such Protection and Deliverance granted to us, our Fears will never misbecome us, we have still the more to lose, and consequently the more to fear; the Truth is, we can hardly preserve a just Awe, Reverence and Veneration for him, without a due Proportion of Fear: No Man ever miscarried, ever lost his Favour, by his Fear that he might lose it. Fear is always awake and apprehensive; and though it sometimes thinks of impertinent Remedies, it seldom omits any one that is necessary: Hope is more asleep, and more negligent, and is more delighted with the Good that may possibly come, than frightened with the Ill that is most like to fall out, and will support it self with one Example of God's wonderful Mercy, against all the Terror of the Current of his Justice: Whereas it is much wholesomer and safer to fear the worst that naturally flows from his provoked Displeasure, than to hope the best that is possible to result from his fatherly Compassion. The mutual Aid and Supply which these Two Passions of Fear and Hope, well ordered and regulated, administer to us in the Performance of our Duties to Heaven, is our greatest Comfort and

Security. If our Fear from the Misery and Deplorableness of our Condition, and from the long Continuance of that Misery, and more from our Ingratitude to God for former Deliverances, and the odious Breach of so many Vows and Promises made by us before and after those Deliverances, shall suggest to us that God hath not only cast us off, but that he hath cast us off for ever, that he will no more trust us so far as to make another Tryal of our Repentance, and these sad Reflections shall break and depreis our Spirits to that Degree, that we are even disinclined to receive any Comfort; our Christian Hope must come in to our Relief, and may very reasonably raise our drooping and dejected Spirits, by remembering the Wonders which he hath often wrought for the Preservation of the most froward and perverse Offenders; that he hath given the most signal Marks of his Loving-kindness to those who have been the most signally afflicted and humbled by his Chastisement, and in that very Article of Time when they most despaired of it; that it had been often an Argument successfully applied to him, against the Destruction of that People who provoked him without Example, and beyond a Parallel; that by doing it, he would raze out all the Records, and demolish the Monuments of the greatest Miracles he had ever wrought both of Power and Mercy: And it may reasonably be hoped, that after so many Preservations of us, when we were helpless and hopeless, he will not deface the Memory of so transcendent Goodness, by suffering the Objects of it to be for ever destroyed; and therefore we may expect that he hath not forgotten to be gracious, nor shut up his tender Mercies from us: And again, if this Hope gets Ground too fast, raises our Spirits too soon, our Fear must object against that Hope, by suggesting to us, that we are infinitely less worthy than any of those who have received such Mercies: that tho' others did too soon forget them: Yet that they received them with the Reverence and Gratitude that became them, and for some Time retained a just Regard of them; whereas we in the actual receiving them, considered not from whence they came, but entertained them rather with profane Mirth and Jollity, than with a pious Joy that results from a grateful Heart, and never after thought of the Hand that reached them to us; and therefore that we ought not to promise any Thing to our selves, from the Example of what he hath done to others: And thus our Fear and our Hope naturally performing their Offices, we shall so behave our selves, as at least may not farther incense God, and with some kind of Chearfulness patiently wait for his Deliverance.

GRacious Father, let not the Custom and Habit of sinning, nor the Calamities we undergo for that Custom and Habit, deprive us utterly of any Hope of thy Mercy; nor let any gracious Influence of thy Mercy raise any Imagination in us that thou dost not discern our Wickedness, or canst be induced to connive at it: Infuse that religious Fear into our Hearts, that we may tremble at thy Justice, and more tremble at the doing any Thing that may provoke that Justice: Give us so lively a Sense of our own Unworthiness, that we may fear that thy Mercy is not even sufficient to pardon it; and then preserve us from that immoderate Fear, and support us with an humble Hope and Confidence in thee, that thou dost in Mercy look upon us, and upon our true Repentance wilt graciously forget our past and most enormous Transgressions. Amen.

P S A L M

P S A L M LXXVIII.

THERE is not a greater Blessing that God hath bestowed upon Mankind, after the Death of his only Son, and which accompanied and attended upon that Blessing, than that he reduced and contracted all that were to do, and all that we were to believe, into such a short Form, and into such an easy Method, as hath made it so clear and so manifest to us, that it is our own Stupidity and affected Ignorance if we do not believe, and our own perverse and obstinate Impiety if we do not do all that he hath made necessary to be believed or performed by us for our Salvation. That he hath freed us from that fallacious Rule, and Introduction to all Error, which so fatally misled our Forefathers into such a Labyrinth of Impiety and Contradictions, the Tradition of those who lived before us, who knew nothing but what the Fathers taught their Children, and the Generation to come was to declare to their Children; from the Negligence and Uncertainty whereof, we may piously believe that Idolatry, and all those monstrous Sins in the Religion of those Times, and all that dark and unnatural Wickedness which polluted the Lives of Mankind, so contrary to the Light and Purity of Nature, flowed and was produced; and therefore they are very much to blame, (how good soever their Meaning may be) who would carry us back again out of the Light in which God hath planted us by his Gospel, into that Darkeness of the Law, from which he hath redeemed us, to the Tradition of our Forefathers, which hath manifested its Fallibility in all Ages, from the beginning of the World to this Hour; and if it could ever have had any Thing of Integrity in it, it must be presumed of that Season, when Men lived to near a Thousand Years, and every Father could teach his own numerous Issue, and multiplied Progeny, all that himself knew, which was all that was to be known; and yet in that Age, greater Variety of foolish and ridiculous Impieties in Matter of Belief, and more odious Abominations in Matter of Practice were obtruded upon the Infant World, than it hath been since acquainted with; insomuch, as when little more than half the Second Age was passed, reckoning after the Rate that *Adam* lived, God was compelled to destroy Mankind, that the Records of their Wickedness might be destroyed with it. And when the World was again contracted into one small Family, which could not but be well instructed in the Iniquities of their own Age, from which they were redeemed, and must be supposed to fortify themselves and their Children, at least against the Practice of the same kind of Wickedness, for which they had seen the Deluge to have covered the whole Earth, they did not leave behind them the least Memory of what had been done before; and we have very good Reason to believe, that they themselves lived to see the World replenished with Sins as well as with People, and if not with the same Wickedness, with such as made them as much Strangers to their Creation, and Creator; for which there can be no Doubt, the Piety of *Noah* as much provided, as could be performed by Tradition. Nor was it much better from and after the Time of the Law, which being committed to the Custody of the *Levites*, and not enjoined to be read above once in Seven Years, the People were not much

much the wiser for it, but were to receive their Information wholly upon the Matter, by the Tradition of their Elders; and how true a Guide that was to them, appears by their early falling into Idolatry, the Sin of which God was from the Beginning most jealous, and had taken most Pains to restrain them from, both by his express Inhibition of it, and explaining it so well and clearly, that they could not be ignorant what it was; and his exercising such terrible and exemplary Judgments upon their first Approaches towards it: And yet God no sooner vouchsafed to work some Wonder or Miracle for their Conviction and Deliverance, but they found out some other Deity to pay their Thanks and Devotions to, and chose rather to offer their Sacrifices to somewhat they fancied to be like him, than to himself, and in a Manner very different, if not contrary to what he had enjoined; which they could never have done, if they had been without any Kind of Information or Intimation of his Omnipotency and Injunctions, and never would have done, if they had been well and fully instructed of either; all which we may believe upon some Ground, proceeded from the Negligence and Corruption of their Tradition. And whosoever looks with any accuracy upon the History and Genealogy of Idolatry, how dark soever our Records are of that Learning which must be collected from the Practice of Nations, from the most ancient Times downwards, he will find by what Degrees Idolatry was introduced into the Hearts of Men; and that corrupt Waters had been drawn by ill Conduits from the pure Fountain; and that what was really true in itself and truly recommended, and enjoined to be practised, was applied to the Institution of great Errors in Belief, and the Introduction of great Enormities in Practice; which could proceed from no other Root than the Error of Tradition, which between the Ignorance and Weakness of the Relator, and the Credulity of the Hearer, together with the current Temper of the Age, which is never without some Inclination, imposed upon Mankind: And though there might possibly be some few who might be preserved from such a general Delusion, as it often fell out, and who might retain within themselves such a Knowledge of the Truth, as might serve for a faint Propagation thereof; yet the Noise of the Many drowned the Voice of the Few, as it hath ever since done, and the Multitude had always the Authority of Tradition on their Part; and by this Means every Age produced a new Religion, and every Climate new Gods, according to the Variety whereof new and different Services and Sacrifices were provided for them. And as the Zeal and Devotion of Men attributed all that was powerful and all that was excellent to their Gods, and in truth believed them to be all Excellency and Power it self; so the next Age celebrated the most powerful and excellent Men, of whose Power and Virtue they received the most distinct and notable Relations, as the Gods themselves, until Mankind was grown so brutish, that it delighted it self with that Heraldry which found out some Alliance for them with the Gods. And the greatest Men, who indeed were endued with singular Knowledge, and wonderful Virtues and Abilities, were yet so sottish as to imagine, that as much as they exceeded others, by so much they were above Mortality; and were well-pleased with believing, at least wishing that Posterity would look upon them as of an immortal Race, worthy of some Divine Worship; and all this Folly, and Vanity, and Madness, they owed purely to their sole Guide and Instructor, the so celebrated Tradition.

Christ begun his Reign with the Deposition of that fantastical Tyrant which had brought so much of Romance into Religion; and by himself, and his Apostles, who to that Purpose were in the Place of himself, made so short and so plain a Scheme of all that we are obliged to believe or to do, that we need have no Recourse to Tradition to guide us into the necessary Paths of our Salvation: Not that we may not very innocently and very usefully resort to Antiquity, which is Tradition; and from thence know much that is very much worth the knowing, and the knowing whereof may much contribute to the Lustre of Religion it self, and make us the fitter to teach and inform other Men; as no question a great Perfection in Arts and Sciences, and in all human Literature, may so much contribute to the Advancement of Christianity it self, that it may well be thought a fit Handmaid to wait upon her; but it is only as an Attendant, and possibly at some Times may adorn it, never can be of the Essence of it. We have so lively a Transcript of what is necessary to be believed, which is illustrated by declaring what is not necessary; and such an exact Abridgment of all that we are to do, with a plain and evident Inhibition of what we ought not to do; that if we keep our selves within those Bounds, fortify our selves within those Intrenchments which Christ himself hath drawn out, and cast up for our Security, we are as sure of Salvation, as we are that he can give it us. And lest we might be tempted by the natural Curiosity that is in us, to make Sallies out of those Fortifications, and to engage our selves in those Contentions which the Mysteries of Religion might involve us in, and which broke out in the Apostles own Time with the same Warmth and Passion it hath ever since done, St. James took Care to define that new Word Religion to us, that we may without any Scruple know what it is, and what is not it. *If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.* When Christ and his Apostles have taken such Pains to explain and enervate all those Doubts and Difficulties which might arise in the future, it is very great Pity that we take more Pains our selves to make those ways rough and uneasy which are made plain before us, and to perplex our Religion by setting Barricadoes to hinder our own Entrance into Heaven, when a Gate is left open to receive us; and to embarrass our selves again, by appealing to Tradition in Matters made plain by the written Word, which needs no other Interpretation than it carries with it, and in it self; without considering that that Channel hath been as much obstructed and polluted with Superstition and Profaneness under the Gospel, as ever it was with Idolatry under the Law; and how extremely the Church it self is now ashamed of much which was derived by the current Tradition of an Age or Two (as many Miracles of the Saints) as much believed as some other Particulars which they yet retain, appears by its rejecting of many of them: And surely there needs no other Argument to manifest the little Credit that can be given to Tradition, than the very little that is known from the Death of our Saviour, to the Time of the first Christian Emperor. Nor was the Light much clearer that doth shine upon us for some Hundred of Years after his Time, the same Clouds of Barbarity having obstructed and intercepted our Sight in Ecclesiastical Matters, as did in the Civil Policy of Nations: But

But that which is worst of all, and which destroys all possible Security and Confidence in this Rope of Sand, which Tradition is (not to mention the Errors introduced into all Regions and Climates by that Testimony and Derivation); the *Greek Church* hath as clear and as uninterrupted Tradition for whatever they differ in from the *Latin*, as the *Latin Church* can pretend unto. Let us not therefore perplex ourselves with hard Words, and harder Matter, by resorting to Antiquity to inform us of Things we are not bound to know; but practise those Duties which are clearly enjoined to us by the Law of Christ, and which in Truth have been most pleasing to God Almighty, as well under the Law as under the Gospel, as the best Evidence of our Obedience to his Commandments.

We cannot exercise our Devotions more usefully upon any Part of the Old Testament, than upon the History of God's wonderful Loving-kindness to, and miraculous Deliverances of his own chosen People the *Jews*; the Abridgment whereof is so frequently made and recorded in several Places of Scripture, and which is upon the Matter the Subject of most of *David's* Devotions throughout the Body of his Psalms. There we find all the most heightned Acts of Power, and all the most stupendious Effects of that Power, all the transcendent Kindness, and Bounty, and Affection, and all the miraculous Effects of that Kindness and Goodness, which the most exalted Imagination and Inspiration of Man can suppose possible to result from Divinity it self; and there we find the most abject and degenerate Acts of Folly and Madness, the most unexpressible Ingratitude and Baseness of Spirit, the foulest Enormities and Transgressions, and the most sottish and brutish Forgetfulness of all the Good they had received, and the most barefaced Contempt of that Power which had preserved and protected them, which the Malice of the Devil himself can infuse into the Heart of Man. Then we find there again, a Patience and a Mercy contending to be too hard for that Malice, and compassionately to reduce the foulest Transgressors from affecting and pursuing their own Destruction; Checks and Restraints from hurting themselves, and Permission to hurt themselves, till they grow sensible of their Wickedness, and then delivering and redeeming them, because, and only because they were grown sensible: And then we find there too a Perverseness so strong, and an Obstinacy so powerful, an Incorrigibleness so proud, that it was too hard for that Mercy, and drove it from them: And in the last Place, we find there an Anger and an Indignation kindled out of that neglected Patience, and provoked and contemned Mercy, out of their proud Contempt of so many reiterated Blessings, that could not be quenched or appeased, without scattering and dispersing that rebellious Nation over the Face of the whole Earth, till it had lost the Name, at least the Reputation of being a Nation: That since so many Captivities would not reform them, when they continued still in the Knowledge and Distinction of their Tribes, and had some Prophets left amongst them, a total Dispersion and crumbling them into Pieces, without leaving any credible Record to inform any of them of what Tribe they are, that their Solitude may extinguish those Vices to them, which they would retain whilst they were in Community; under which Reproach and Judgment they remain at this Day; and are no less a Monument, nor less notorious of God's wonderful Severity, and highest Indignation, than they were for so many Ages of his Love and Benignity, and of the most fatherly

Tenderness and Compassion that he hath vouchsafed to any of the Sons of Adam.

If in this Perusal and Contemplation, we find that we have transcribed any of their Vices into our own Practice; if we find a kind of Resemblance between us; that God did scarce work greater Miracles for them than he hath done for us; that he suffered us to wander in the Wilderness, though not half so long as they, to be banished our own Country, and to seek our Bread in Foreign Nations, and sometimes even in desolate Places; desolate as to us, by the want of Bowels and Generosity in the Inhabitants; and yet that he fed us in that Wilderness, as he did them; that he struck some Rocks, and made the Water flow from Hearts and Natures as hard as those Rocks, and which took as little Pleasure and Delight in the Good they did for us, as those Rocks were sensible of; then he gave us Meat as miraculously in that Wilderness, as he did to them; that he often supplied us in our Banishment, by Means as extraordinary, and sometimes Ways as unknown to our selves, as if he had sent it in Rain from the Clouds; and that at last he redeemed us out of this Wilderness, brought us out of this Banishment as wonderfully, by a Union of Contradictions, by a Concurrence of Causes which never desired the same Effects; making those the Instruments of our Recovery who had destroyed us, and wished us no better now than they did then, and restored us to our Country, and our Country to us, in a Season when we most despaired of each other: And if we find a Resemblance likewise between us, in the Returns we have made to him, in our Ingratitude and Neglect of all those Duties which we are obliged to perform towards him, that we do industriously endeavour to forget what he hath done for us, and imitate them in their Method of murmuring that he hath done no more: If neither his Benefits nor his Chastisement have wrought upon us, but that we are more ready to repeat our old Transgressions, than ever we have been to ask Pardon for them; if this be the Fruit of our Reflections, or if these Reflections do not, like a strong *Northern* Blast, nip and kill all such Fruit in the Bud, we are very much to blame. If we do not reflect likewise upon the Judgments which attended them, as a Portion assigned to us, and if we continue in their Obstinacy, we must expect to inherit their Fate; and after having suffered all Mortification and Calamity in our Country, which hath been the Scene upon which we have acted all our Impieties; to be deprived of our Country, as they were by some powerful and insolent Enemy, and to spend the Remainder of our Lives amongst other Nations, whose Language we do not know, and to whom neither our Persons nor our Manners are agreeable; which is the pouring out the Viol of God's Wrath in this World upon us. For as our Duty to our Country is greater than to any particular Persons in it, so the being for ever deprived of our Country is a greater Punishment than the undergoing any Calamities in it; especially when we are still liable to the same or worse Calamities in a strange Country, which is their Fate, and so must be our Lot.

Almighty God, who hast vouchsafed to give us by the Dictate of thy Holy Spirit, such plain and clear Prescriptions and Directions for the Performance of our Duty to thee in this World, in such a Manner that we may be sure to be received and accepted by thee in the next; and hast preserved the unquestionable Record of those thy Dictates

Dictates that is always before our Eyes; so that we cannot pretend Ignorance of what will please thee. Infuse, we beseech thee, into our Hearts thy Grace, that we may have a lively Sense, a true Acknowledgment, and just Reverence of that thy inestimable Gift, and carefully and devoutly practise what thou hast enjoined us to do, and what thou expectest we should do; and that we may find a Testimony of thy Acceptation of our hearty and passionate Desires to please thee in our own Consciences: Make us often reflect upon thy great Goodness in so many ways manifested unto us, in thy Chastisements, in thy Judgments, and in thy Mercies; how thou hast suffered our Enemies to triumph over us in our own Country, and in our Banishment; how thou didst support us in that Banishment, and redeem us from that Banishment, and made us again to triumph over those who did triumph over us. O let us never forget those Miracles of thy Mercy, which are as necessary to be continued to us, as they were to be wrought for us: Preserve us from all Temptations to offend thee; and let us be more afraid of offending thee, than of the Punishments which must befall us for offending thee; never suffer the prevailing Power of our Enemies, nor the more prevailing Power of our own Sins, to deprive us of our Country, and force us to seek an Habitation in a strange Land. Amen.

P S A L M LXXIX.

THE Judgments which God usually inflicts upon us for our Sins are very grievous, almost insupportable; we should not look upon them as Judgments, scarce as Punishments, if they were not very grievous; if they did not, both in respect of the Pain and the Duration, make us pay dear Interest for the short Pleasures we enjoy in those Sins which brought those Judgments upon us, we should hardly decline the one out of Apprehension of the other: Nay, all the Apprehension we can entertain of the one, and which works upon us more than our mere Apprehension, at least awakens and terrifies that Oppression, the Evidence and Manifestation of God's Anger and Displeasure against other Men, for acting those Sins which we our selves are every Day guilty of, doth not, cannot restrain us from committing those Sins which we know do and must provoke him. Yet as there are in us several Degrees of Offences, which do not equally provoke and incense God's Anger and Justice against us, though the least of them is mortal, without his exceeding great Mercy; so there are several Degrees of his Anger and Judgments which he inflicts upon Mankind; and in the whole Catalogue of them, there is no one so terrible, so much the Effect of his Indignation, as when he exposes a Nation to the Inconveniences and Mischiefs, and Rage and Fury of War; whether it be a War amongst our selves from the Provocations of our own Envy and Malice towards each other, or from a Foreign Enemy, which out of Pride and Contempt of us, would invade and deprive us of our Country. Of all God's Judgments, War is the most terrible, the most destructive. David, who had much more Experience of God's Mercies than of his Judgments, knew well enough the Degrees of both, when he chose the Judgment of a devouring Plague, rather than to be exposed to the Insolence

lence of a prevailing Enemy in War, which was the highest Extreme of the Punishments proposed, and was more insupportable than Famine it self, and therefore deprecated accordingly. The worst Effect and Consequence of a Plague, is the Destruction of so many Thousand People who perish by it: Many are not infected, and many recover who are infected, and none who survives is the worse for it, and all have the Benefit of a Mortification, which could not but very frequently, at least, make deep Impression upon their Spirits, in the Contemplation of that Death which they saw entred into their own Houses, or met, and even touched in the Streets and Ways, and from thence raise their Devotions to Heaven for Mercy and Protection in Death or Life. Famine is a less violent and raging Judgment, there is more Warning to prevent it, and more Deliberation to support it; it may be the Cause of Death, produce the Diseases and Sicknels that is determined by Death, but is not it self long felt, the Appetite ceasing in a very short Time after there is a want of what should satisfy it; so that it is very hardly to be distinguished from those other common Diseases which every Day accompany Men to their Graves: When the Strength of Nature is decayed, and can no more be repaired, it finds frequently Relief from the Charity of those who are not reduced to the same Streights; and if it be general, there is a natural Support from Hope, which is a great Cordial to fainting and drooping Spirits: The Harvest will bring Relief, and in the mean Time the Earth it self produces somewhat which Nature will comply with, and feed upon: However, at worst, there is a mutual Performance not only of the Offices of Humanity towards each other, but of Christianity and Kindness, People dying in each others Arms with mutual Devotions and Prayers for each other, which cannot but be attended with a kind of Comfort in Death it self; Famine very rarely having separated Men from Communion with each other, and those prodigious Instances of preying upon live or dead Bodies, not being the natural Effects of Famine. But War breaks in like a hungry Wolf or Lion into a Flock of Sheep, it worries many which it doth not kill, it wounds many which it doth not destroy, and kills many which it doth not touch, and leaves none secure or undispersed: It tramples upon all Justice, and subdues and extinguishes all natural Affections and Relations, and contemns and triumphs over Religion it self: War makes no Distinction between Sacred and Profane, exercises its Rage and Fury equally upon both Sexes; and that its Barbarity may be immortal, it survives Death it self, and prosecutes those it kills with want of Burial; and if it could reach the Soul of its Enemy, it would destroy that too with equal Delight; all its Food is Blood, and its Appetite so ravenous, that it never thinks it hath Blood enough: So that when it hath destroyed all its Enemies, it preys upon its Friends and Promoters, kindles Jealousies between those who first gave it Life, and rests not till the Destroyers have destroyed themselves. All other Judgments in this World have their Periods, their Expiration; after extreme Misery and Want, Plenty is restored to us, at least a Competency, which equally relieves the Spirits, and sets them on Work for their own Advancement; the very Memory of our Want and former Necessity hath a good Relish, and gives our change of Fortune a Taste that makes it grateful and delightful to us. Sicknels is attended and succeeded by Health, which quickly repairs all the Breaches that Enemy had made upon us; fills up those Wrinkles which Leanness and Decay of Flesh had made upon us, restores that Blood and Freshness

ness to our Countenance, which Paleness had covered and disfigured; and restores that Vigor to our Mind, that Sharpness and Vivacity to our Understanding, which Weakness, and Pain, and Melancholy had deprived us of; insomuch, as whether we are in truth more vigorous than we were before, which is very often a Benefit which results from some Sickness, or whether we have a better Sense of that Blessing after the other Mortification, we seldom are impaired by Sickness to that Degree that Health doth not repair. But War, even when it is extinguished, leaves not only many Scars, which even disfigures the Beauty of Peace, but Wounds which are incurable, and bleed still; it leaves Monuments of its Rage, and Malice, and Destruction, which Time it self cannot recover or repair; it corrupts the Nature and Manners of a Nation, that after the Expiration of the War, it retains still that Ferity and Brutishness that was introduced by it, and a whole Age scarce restores it to its primitive Virtue and Integrity.

Since then War is the greatest and heaviest Judgment God can inflict upon a People that hath most provoked him, the most infectious Disease he can send amongst us, to deprive us of Health and Strength, and Delight in each other, the most poisoned Arrow he can shoot out of his whole Quiver, we may be very sure that he hath not been lightly provoked, when he draws out that Weapon; and that he doth not intend to take a light Vengeance upon a Nation, which he exposes to the unruly Rage of War. It is too late then to expiate his Wrath by Prayers and Tears, there must be much Blood mingled with the Sacrifice; ordinary Applications, even that which hath pacified him at other Times, will not serve our Turn. * *Go, and cry unto the gods which you have chosen, let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation,* says God himself to those who were so ungrateful to him for former Deliverances; and he will say unto us, Cry unto the Gods which you have chosen, call upon your Pride, and upon your Ambition, upon your Lusts, and your Debaucheries; call upon your Malice, and your Revenge, the Gods to whom you have sacrificed your Youth, and the Vigor of that precious Time he lent to you to be spent in his Service, try if those Weapons with which you have foolishly provoked him, and impiously made War upon him with, can deliver you now in the Time of your Tribulation, can defend and preserve you in that War he hath sent upon you. When great Princes are compelled by the Injustice and Insolence of their Neighbours to make War upon them, they commonly compel those Enemies who have provoked them, to bear the Charge and defray the Expence of that War; it is but Reason to expect that God will exact the same from us too, that he will pay us in our own Kind: And since we have not known how to value the Blessings of Peace which he once gave us, and upon our crying and importunate Sins, snatched from us, and deprived us of; and then upon some formal and hypocritical Shews of Repentance, restored to us again; and yet we renew and repeat our old Transgressions, and assault him with the same Provocations he had before so eminently punished, and so wonderfully pardoned; and are become so weary of Peace, that to be rid of him, we have even rejected the Peace of our own Consciences; it is most probable, as it is most just, that he will send such a War upon us, as may be proportionable, and most grievous to those Sins which have provoked him, and in which we have taken most Delight: An Enemy as sinful as our selves, who

* Judg. x. 14.

who shall triumph over us in the Exercise of that Wickedness which hath subjected us to his Tyranny, and oppress us with the more Joy and Delight, because we are his Rivals in Wickedness, and desire to be more wicked than himself. A War carried on against us by a Nation possessed with the same Pride and Insolence, by the same Passions, and the same Contempts of heavenly Providence as we our selves; which will be the greater Grievance and Affliction to us, to see them prosper in the same Iniquities which have destroyed us, and subjected us to their Pride and Fury. * *O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand, is my indignation*, says the Spirit of God by the Prophet *Isaiab*. The Sins of *Israel*, which then provoked God, and drew down his heavy Judgments upon them, were Injustice, and Idolatry, and Hypocrisy; and the *Assyrians*, of all the Nations of the World, were the proudest, the most insolent, and the most idolatrous. When *Israel* was at worst, it had still a Remnant, some there were who offered their Prayers and Devotions to God as they ought to do; whereas the *Assyrian* was a Heathen without the least Knowledge of God, or the least Fear of him; and was so far from looking upon himself as an Instrument, as the Rod or Staff in the Hand of any other Power, that he believed that the Lord God of *Israel* had not Power enough to rescue *Israel* out of his Hand; and therefore the Oppression under such an Adversary, was a Circumstance more grievous than the Tyranny itself, and was the greatest Mortification to those who least merited the Persecution, and who most piously submitted to it. It is high Time to reflect sadly upon our own Condition, and by our most fervent Devotion to deprecate this heavy Judgment, and to beseech God that he will exercise and humble, and even destroy us by any other of his Visitations, rather than put the Staff of his Indignation into the Hand of any Enemy to make War upon us; especially such an Enemy, who is as notoriously wicked as our selves, the Prosperity of whose Iniquities and Profaneness will more propagate Sin, than our Punishment can magnify God's Justice: And if we have made our selves so unworthy of the blessing of Peace, that we must undergo the Calamities of War, that it may be with such an Enemy, from whom we may be instructed in Virtue and the Practice of Religion, that our Manners may be reformed by their Precepts and Example, though our Liberty and Estates be taken from us by the Force of their Power; and by that Reformation of our Lives, if no gentle Remedy can have Operation upon us, he may first restore Peace to our own Consciences, and then establish it in our unhappy Nation. It is true, we can by no Means conclude, that God is well-pleased with that People to whom he vouchsafes to grant all outward Prosperity, and the enjoying that Prosperity in a visible Calm, and settled Peace, which we see is commonly indulged to Kingdoms eminent for the Practice of most transcendent Vices, and for the Contempt of all true Devotion; but sure we may piously believe that he is most displeased with, and incensed against that Nation and Kingdom, which either by Choice or Force is engaged in War; and if they are delighted with it, that they will at last be put to undergo the utmost Chastisement and Miseries, which are the natural Attendants of it.

* Isa. x. 5.

Almighty God, look down with Compassion upon our poor Country, and make it fit for thy Compassion. O remember not against us our old Iniquities, let us not be deprived of Peace, because we have not enough valued the Benefits and the Blessing of it, and be delivered up again into the devouring Hands of War, with which we have been too well pleased: Perfect thy Mercy and Loving-kindness towards us, by making us truly sensible, and then worthy of it. We are become a Reproach unto our Neighbours, a Scorn and Derision to them who are round about us, for our manifold Ingratitude to thee, for thy miraculous Deliverance and Redemption of us and our miserable Kingdom, when it was upon the very brink of Destruction and Despair, and when no less than thy own Right Hand, and the Strength of thy Arm could have preserved us. Make us, O Lord, to despise our selves for such our Ingratitude, more than they can despise us; and to renounce all those Sins which are the ground of that Ingratitude; and let our true Repentance, and what we have formerly suffered, expiate for all our Transgressions, and appease thy just Anger and Displeasure, that thou mayest preserve us and the Kingdom from the Calamities of another War from within our selves, and from a Foreign Enemy; vouchsafe this Mercy and Protection to us, for thy Son Jesus Christ his Sake. Amen.

P S A L M LXXX.

As for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth. If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing Iniquity, he shall surely live, says the Spirit of God by the Prophet Ezekiel: That we may not deceive our selves by an Opinion, that our having performed some acceptable Service to our God in one Part of our Life, our having lived soberly and innocently for some Time, hath laid up a Stock of Mercy and Forgiveness for our future Transgressions; or that God will be obliged by what we have done well, to pardon and forgive what we shall hereafter do amiss. We may piously hope, that when God hath once vouchsafed to give us so much Grace as to please him, and to lead any Part of our Life with that Integrity as to be grateful to him, that he will not withdraw his Protection from us to that degree, as to let us fall into such grievous Sins as must make a Divorce between us; and of this we may be assured, if the Fault be not in us; if we do not first withdraw our Duty from him, he will not, he cannot withdraw his Goodness from us. But if we grow weary of doing well, or have the Vanity and Presumption to think that it is in our Power, and that we can discontinue it, and resume it again when we please; that we can gratify our Passions and Appetites by indulging for a Season, and then reconcile our selves again to him by a voluntary Repentance: If we do not in Truth feel such a lively Pleasure and Delight in the Performance of our Duty in every*

7 L good

* Ezek. xxxiii. 12. 15.

good Thought and Purpose, and more in every honest and pious Action, that we nauseate and abhor any Temptation to Vice and Wickedness; we have taken very ill Measures of him, and for our selves. That slight temporary Virtue shall be so far from being applied to our Advantage and Benefit, that it shall be an Aggravation to our future Iniquities, as an Evidence that our Nature and Inclination disposed us to do well, and that our Choice and Election carried us to do ill. It is the Justice we practise amongst our selves; an Injury and Unkindness from a familiar Friend, is most grievous, most intolerable, very hardly to be forgiven. He that from an honest and blameless Conversation, from a religious and devout Life, degenerates to a guilty Course of Life, to an impious Delight in Profaneness and Irreligion, hath broken his Friendship to God Almighty, and renounced all Commerce with him, and Dependence upon him; he must not wonder if he be more severely and rigorously dealt with than a Stranger, one who hath never received a Trust from Divine Providence, or so much as owned an Inclination or Desire to please and serve him.

If then we are not to hope that any Good we have formerly been enabled to do, will in the least Degree expiate for the Ill we shall hereafter commit; we shall be more to blame, if we imagine that we can serve God by a Deputy, that he will bless us for what others have done, for the Services which our Forefathers have performed to him; that the Sacrifices which they offered shall turn to our Account, or that he will therefore bless our Land and Nation, because his Name hath been long called upon there, and his Worship maintained in Purity and Integrity of Heart, though for the present we are become an ungrateful and ungodly Generation, a People who have forgotten that we have ever served him, or that he hath ever blessed us. Of all the Species of Sinners, the Backsliders, they who from a customary or faint Practice of Religion, have relapsed into a sturdy Neglect of all Religion, have been most odious and abominable to him. The Uprightness and Sincerity of *David*, and his reducing all *Israel* to a perfect Knowledge and Adoration of his Divine Majesty, and God's own Promises to him for that Integrity, and to his chosen People for their Sakes from whom they were descended, could not preserve the Kingdom from being divided, and the greater Part thereof from being separated from the Obedience of his Grandson *Rehoboam*. And as never any People under Heaven received so many stupendious Blessings and Deliverances as they did, so that the whole Treasure of God's Goodness seemed to be poured out upon them, and the Country in which they lived; as if all the other Parts of the World had been out of his Care, and the Circuit of his Providence, and had not likewise been the work of his own Hands: So at other times, by his severe and terrible Justice, no other Nation of the Universe ever underwent such sharp Mortifications, such prodigious and insupportable Judgments, such Exterminations as that People the *Jews* have done; as if God had contracted all his Anger into one Lump, and dissolved it, and emptied all the Viols of his Wrath which he hath prepared for this World, upon their Heads. The Heathen have not escaped his Justice, and all the Kingdoms of the Earth have felt the Weight of his signal Justice upon their signal Transgressions and Impieties; but no one hath been so notoriously and eminently prosecuted, and pursued with successive and unheard-of Penalties and Judgments, as that poor People have been. God hath never so often removed any other Nation

out of his Sight, sent them into Captivity, that they might propagate their Infamy in all Climates. And whereas in all other Kingdoms of the World, which have enjoyed their Vicissitudes of Prosperity and worldly Blessings, upon one Nations driving out another, the Conqueror hath always found the Land as fruitful as it was before, and the new Inhabitants enjoyed as much Benefit from it, as the old had done: That universal Curse hath never fallen upon any other Place or People, that the Soil should be curs'd with those who dwelt upon it; and the Fruitfulness of the Country should be removed out of God's Sight, as well as the Inhabitants; as if our Saviour had cursed that whole Earth, as he did the Fig-tree, that it should never more bear Fruit. That the same Land which was the Garden of the World, God's own Garden, where he delighted to repose himself; that the same Land which flowed with Milk and Honey, which fed and maintained so many Hundred Thousand fighting Men, should become so barren, that a handful of Men can but live upon it, and very poorly, is a part of that Portion which God's Indignation hath only bequeathed to the *Jews*, who would not be retained by all the Benefits he could heap upon them to continue in his Service: And it had been very unreasonable and unjust, that a proud, an obstinate, and idolatrous Generation, should inherit the same Peace and Plenty, and Security, which had been for some Ages enjoyed by their pious and devout Progenitors, which magnified the Mercies and Bounty they had received, and worshipped only that God from whom they had received them; and whose Merit, and Tears, and Prayers could not yet procure a Reconciliation and Remission for them.

Let then those particular Men of any Kingdom, or that Kingdom in general which hath received the greatest Instances of God's Love and Kindness towards them, in a long Peace and Prosperity; that their Power is increased, and extended in large Dominions from Sea to Sea; that their Neighbours love them so well, as not to be grieved at the Happiness they enjoy; and fear them so much, that they dare not endeavour to interrupt, and take it from them; that they seem like a Vineyard, or fruitful Garden, inclosed and secured by heavenly Protection from Violence and Trespass: I say, let these Persons or People wisely and piously consider their own Condition, make such Use of this Prosperity, and make such Application to him who gives it to them, that it may continue and remain to them; let them cultivate this Vineyard, and this Garden, that it may yield Fruit in Proportion to the Accommodations it hath above other Places, to the Blessings it enjoys above all their Neighbours; they must be careful to maintain their Fence well, to preserve their Security by strict Discipline in their Manners, and in continual Acknowledgments and fervent Devotions to him who hath made their Hedge so strong, and who can only maintain his own Workmanship. If that Vigilance and Address be wanting on their Parts, and so they grow unworthy of the Favours they receive, and confident that they are so surely possessed of them, that they cannot be removed from them; if they suffer their own wild Ambition, and unruly Insolence, Passions wilder than the most untamed Beasts, to break into this Vineyard, apply the Fruitfulness thereof to the Damage and Oppression of their innocent and weak Neighbours, they will find that other wild Beasts will break in likewise at the Gaps they have made, and root up those Plants they neglected to cherish, and reduce them to the Misery they desired to bring upon others; and they cannot

make a better Computation of the Sufferings they are like to undergo, than from a true Reflection upon the immense Happiness they have enjoyed above other Men.

We have the less Reason to be troubled at this Severity, that we must not hope to fare the better for having been innocent and good, when we cease to be so; nor to have the entire and worthy Actions of others, of how near a Relation soever to us, to be put into the Scale, to help to weigh down our own Iniquities; because not only the Wickedness of other Men, nor the Wickedness of other Times, of how transcendent a Nature soever, shall not be imputed to us; but even our own Transgressions, though never so enormous, and in which we are sure more to abound than in any Thing that is good even in the most innocent Hour of our Life, shall do us no Harm, after we abhor those Transgressions, and seriously detest our selves for having committed them. The proud Sins of our Ambition, and the unruly and violent Sins of our Anger and Fury, the loud Cries of our Lust and Intemperance, and the devouring Rapine of our Covetousness and Oppression, shall be wiped away and forgotten, the Noise of them shall be suppressed, if we have in Truth suppressed all those Passions and Appetites, not raked up, but extinguished all that Fire in our own Breasts and Spirits; if our Humility and Subjection of Mind be as evident and notorious as ever our Ambition was; if our Patience and Meekness be as apparent as our Anger and Fury was: It must be very visible that we have quenched all that Fire of our Lust, and the Rage of our Intemperance, with the Abundance and with the Sincerity of our Tears and Remorse; and there must be as much Manifestation of our Bounty and Charity, as there ever was of our Covetousness and Oppression. But we must take Heed; God cannot be deceived, and will not be mocked. Repentance is not a Game that can be artificially play'd. It would be a kind of good Husbandry, a way to thrive and grow rich by, if after some Years (how few soever) spent in Fraud, Oppression and Violence, that Bank of Unrighteousness might be preserved for our Posterity, and the Guilt of it wiped off or washed away by Acknowledgments and Confessions, though never so ingenuous and sincere, or by Sighs and Tears, how abundantly soever shed and poured out, and how real and conscientious soever they are: Or by publick Donations or Foundations of Charity for the Relief and Support of poor and miserable People. Those Actions which are true Signs of Repentance, and which must always accompany a true Repentance, may yet attend a Counterfeit one; at least may not be enough, may not be all which are necessary to the true. It is not enough to be sorry; I must repair; I ought not to be charitable at other Mens Charges, or think to relieve the Wants of some, with the Estates of those which I have reduced to Want by my Fraud and Oppressions: We must first pay our Debts, before we presume to give Gifts, otherwise we pretend to give what belongs to others, and in which we have no Property of our own. There must be a restoring the Pledge, a giving again that which a Man hath robbed. I must not only restore what I have taken away, but restore it to the Person from whom I have unjustly taken it; otherwise I make one Man the better by a kind of Bounty of my own, with what another Man is the worse for, by being robbed or defrauded by me; the Person injured must be repaired; I must restore any Man his good Name again, who hath been traduced by my Calumnies and Slanders, by all the publick Acknowledgments, and all

the publick Testimonies which are in my Power to make and to give; asking God Almighty Pardon and Forgiveness, is not Recompence to my Neighbour for what he hath suffered by me; nor doth he indeed ask God's Pardon with any Integrity of Heart, who doth not then intend to ask it from his Neighbour whom he hath offended; and he who ab- stains from that because he is ashamed, retains a Pride of Heart still, which will again invite him to commit the same Trespas, and is far from restoring the Pledge: Shame is one of the Penalties which ought to be paid for our Presumption, especially when others suffer by our Presumption. They who comply with these Obligations, and observe the other Injunction of the Prophet, in walking for the future in the Statutes of Life, have unfinned the former Sins, and shall not be the worse for their past Wickedness.

GOOD God, we need not the Imputation of other Mens Sins to make us fit Objects of thy utmost Wrath; we have, miserable Wretches that we are, enough offended thee our selves, to draw down all the Judgments thou hast denounced against the most sinful Nation; and if thou couldest forget our old Offences against thee in the Years past, we repeat the same Sins again every Day, and provoke thee with new and unheard-of Wickedness, as if we lived to no other Purpose, than to transmit to those who are to succeed us, new Inventions to offend thee. We have forgotten all that thou hast done for us, and would be even content to be without thy future Mercies, upon Condition that thou wouldest likewise forget that there is such a Nation as we are upon the Face of the Earth; so that it is a Wonder that thou hast not already consumed us, or given us as a Prey to Strangers. But O thou Preserver and Restorer of Man- kind, look down upon us, and let not our Sins drive thy Mercy from us, and keep our Prayers from approaching thee. Give us such a Measure of thy Grace for the short Time we have yet to live, that we may be so confounded with, and ashamed of our past Wickedness, that thou mayest be inclined to forget it, and strike it off from our Account. O Lord, cause thy Face to shine upon us, and save us. Amen.

PSALM LXXXI.

IT was no ill Reflection that Tully made upon the Delight and Plea- sure Men naturally have in Communication, in telling other Men what they know, and what they have seen; that if a Man could get up into Heaven, and take a clear View of the Majesty thereof, and behold the Beauty of the Stars, and the other Ornaments of the Sky, *in sua- rem illam admirationem ei fore quæ jucundissima fuisset, si aliquem cui narraret, habuisset*, that wonderful Prospect would be even without a Relish, for want of some-body to tell it to, and to confer with upon that stupendious Composition. Men do not see so much, because they do not mark so well alone as in Conversation; and he who informs o- thers, often teaches himself; it being a Blessing upon Communication, that new and useful Thoughts occur in the Acts of Communication. When God bestows any signal Blessing upon a Nation, or upon particular

Persons, he expects they should feel great Joy in themselves, and publish it with Joy to others; their Joy is their Gratitude, and they are not enough possessed with it, if they conceal it, and keep it to themselves. God doth not only love a chearful Giver, one that takes Delight in doing his Duty to him, that feels an inward Joy in doing or suffering what he ought to do, how grievous soever the outward Appearance seems to be, nothing is so chearful as all religious Actions are which are performed by a religious Heart; but he loves a chearful Receiver, that makes a Noise in his Acknowledgments of the Benefits conferred upon him in the Ears of other Men. It is a Jollity that becomes him, and an Evidence that it makes Impression upon him; such a pious Transportation is a kind of Sacrifice with which God is well-pleased. All the Excesses spring from a good Root, which inflames the Hearts of the Standers-by with the greater Reverence; and so a Man produces Piety in the Hearts of other Men, as well as improves it in his own. *Ante omnia fac, disce gaudere*, was not the Precept of an *Epicurean* Philosopher, who was delighted with gross Pleasures, but of a Stoic, who made as great Flights towards Heaven as any Man who was not possessed with an entire Knowledge of it. *Crede mihi* (says he) *res est severa, verum gaudium*, true Joy is a grave, a constant, a severe Passion; examines well the Matter out of which Joy is produced, takes Care that it be innocent, and looks that it hath no Mixture, no Allay that may corrupt the Integrity of it. That which is Grief and Affliction to other Men, (I speak not of the malicious or envious Man, who is grieved at the Prosperity of others) cannot bring true Joy to a pious and religious Heart. There may be a very innocent Delight in the outward Blessings of this World, Health, and Plenty, and Friendship, which hath a great Progress to make before it be advanced into Joy: Laughter is a Disease, it proceeds frequently from the Spleen, from the Mother, and from many other bodily Distempers; it is a Sin when it is produced (as it is often) from the Content wicked Men take in the Misfortunes and Afflictions of those they do not love; it inhabits the Face and Countenance of Fools and Idiots, neither of which sort of Men know any Thing of Joy; and God forbid that it should be any Sign of Joy in the best and most innocent Men, who commonly laugh at sudden Accidents which befall others to their Hurt, and for which they are heartily sorry; but Joy is a Composition made in the Heart, by a full Deliberation upon the Subject, upon the Nature of that which administers Matter of Delight, by Reflection upon God's Part and Blessing in it, which makes it permanent, that he hath sent or given it as an Evidence and Testimony of his Kindness; and from thence, and thence only, that Joy proceeds and grows up, which extends the Heart to such an Hilarity in the Eyes, and in the Countenance, to such a Fullness in the Mouth and the Tongue, that it cannot be concealed, but must be uttered and published abroad; the very Endeavour to conceal it is a kind of Sacrilege, and applying that to lay and servile Uses, which is consecrated and dedicated to God's Service. Where this Joy of Heart is, and it ought to be upon the Receipt of all signal and extraordinary Blessings, whether it be upon private and particular Men, or upon States and Nations, it ought not to be kept private, it must be published; the Joy of particular Men in those Cases must be communicated to their Children, to their Family, to all their Friends, that they may be Witnesses and Parties in the Acknowledgment and Gratitude that is due to

to Divine Providence for such transcendent Favours; and the Joy of Nations and Kingdoms upon notorious Deliverances and Redemptions, ought to have all the publick Celebration that can be imagined, to be made manifest to all the World, that all the World may see and stand amazed, and tremble at the Sight: That let it join Hand in Hand together, by an active Combination in assisting the wrong Doers, or a passive Combination in not assisting them who are oppressed, to bring Misery upon a Neighbour Nation, God can and will redeem the injured and oppressed People from all Calamities, and make their Prosperity as visible, and give it as great a Lustre, as ever their Misfortunes were, and as ever the Power and Success of their Enemies was adorned with. *David* practised and prescribed this kind of Celebration with all the Evidence of Chearfulness and Joy imaginable; not only at the Time of the Reception of those wonderful Blessings, but upon those Days which were prescribed for the Memorial of those Blessings. God prescribed the first Holy-day himself upon the Creation, and he afterwards prescribed several other Festival Days for the Acknowledgment of extraordinary Favours; and there was *dies clangoris & tubarum*, a Day for the blowing of Trumpets; and Christian Churches and Christian States have ever since set apart some Days, or some part of a Day, for the publishing their Joy, and keeping alive the Memory of very great Blessings and Deliverances; and particular Men may piously enjoin an Anniversary to themselves, or a more frequent Remembrance for some Good that hath befallen them on such a Day, and celebrate the Memory of it with their Friends, and remember and discourse of every Circumstance thereof with great Joy and Delight.

Ingratus est qui remotis arbitris agit gratias; the Philosopher holds it Ingratitude to make Acknowledgment for great Blessings in private, when no body is present: It is an Act of great Generosity in him who confers Favours, to do it as privately and as secretly as may be, but he that receives them cannot publish them too loudly; though he cannot requite them, which few Men can, he can confess them, which every Man can do. It holds so in Divinity too; it is not enough to confess our Sins in private, if they have been committed in Publick; if I have calumniated or traduced my Neighbour, whereby his Reputation hath suffered, asking God Forgiveness for it in my Prayers will not serve my Turn; I am to ask him Forgiveness whom I have injured, and if I do not, it is a sure Sign that I did it not heartily of God himself. When God raises my Reputation above other Mens, makes those Faculties which he hath given me more apparent and conspicuous, or more acceptable than other Mens, whose Faculties, it may be, are better than mine, and thereby I obtain greater Advantages and Preferments than other Men, who in Truth are more worthy of them than I am: When God upholds me upon some Precipice, even as I am falling, till I can look about, and move my Feet to a safe Station; if he snatches me from a Danger that is ready to devour me, it is Ingratitude, a foul Ingratitude to confess this, *remotis arbitris*, only in my private Devotions; all Men who know me, must know by my frequent Discourses, by my chearful Acknowledgments, by my Humility in my whole Demeanor, that I do look upon all these Blessings as his Alms, as his Bounty, as his Magnificence, for no other Reason, but that they may more eminently appear to be his, by the unworthiness of the Subject that received them: They who conceal such Obligations

tions have a mind, whatever sudden Ejaculations are sometimes uttered to themselves, to rob God of his Share; and much, if not all their good Fortune, should be imputed to their own Merit, or, which pleased them as well, to their own Dexterity or Address, which they reckon more their own than any good Quality can be. There is too great Cause to fear, that too many Men receive Obligations from God in the same manner they do from Men, with inward Murmuring and Repining that they are no greater, that they came no sooner, that another Man hath received more: *Hoc mihi prestitit, sed illi plus, sed illi maturius.* They rarely thank him, and look not upon what he hath done for them with so much hearty Gratitude, as they do with Envy upon what he hath done for others; and we may, without Breach of Charity, doubt that Men who are so reserved in the acknowledging and publishing the Blessings they have received, are infected with that proud Frowardness, and believe that they have deserved at least as much as hath been dispensed to them: However, it is the most sovereign Remedy for the Prevention and Cure of that Malady, to declare publicly the Sense we have of such extraordinary Blessings, and by confessing how little we did for or towards the procuring it, make it manifest that we receive it wholly as his Work, and are only passive in the receiving it. It is very strange, that Men should not find a wonderful Delight in such publick Confessions; and if Pride or Vanity could consist with the devout Exercise of a religious Heart, those very Affections would tempt a Man to it; for is it not a much greater Glory to obtain a Victory over our Enemies by the immediate and manifest Favour and Hand of God, than by a Man's own Courage and Conduct? Is it not greater Honour to receive Honour and Preferment by the Direction of God Almighty, than by the Inclination of the highest and most powerful Favourite? All People look with more Esteem and Awe upon a Man whom they discern to be in Grace with Heaven, than upon the Favourite of the greatest Kings; nay, Kings themselves look upon such a Person with Reverence, and are solicitous to employ them. He that hath this true Joy about him, is never afraid of losing it; it is within him, it is in his own House, and he carries it with him abroad whithersoever he goes, without Apprehension of Thieves, who would steal it from him by Calumnies and Lyes, or of open and tyrannical Oppressors, who would ravish it from him, by taking away his Preferments and his Fortune, in which they can only take Joy themselves, they care not for his, nor he for theirs.

As this Joy, with all the possible Circumstances in the chearful expressing it, is the Duty, and becomes the Integrity of every private and particular Man; so it ought to be more apparent and visible in Nations and Kingdoms which are redeemed from Captivity, or any intolerable Oppression under which they groaned, by such an extraordinary Influence of Divine Providence that there appears no Footsteps of Human Power in the Deliverance. When a wicked and tyrannical Force hath so subdued a People or Kingdom, that all the Monuments of Right and Justice are wiped out, and the Pillars which should support it are demolish'd, and all Ways and Means attempted by themselves have miscarried, and made all their Hopes desperate, and aggravated and increased the Weight of their Servitude; if upon the Prayers and Tears of that Nation, upon their Cries and Lamentations sent up to Heaven by them, God Almighty shall vouchsafe to remove those Burthens from their Shoulders, and to free them from their Servitude, to restore them to all the Liberty they could

pretend to, and to administer all these Blessings to them in so gentle and calm a Manner, that their Enemies shall be subdued without the Noise of a Drum, that the proudest Men alive shall be overthrown by the Dejection of their own Spirits without a Hand lift up against them; that they are more terrified with the soft Approach, and still Motion of the Redemption, than they would have been with the Noise of his loudest Thunder, with the Presence of any Royal Army to destroy them. Sure a Nation thus preserved, thus restored, is obliged to manifest their Joy in the highest and loudest Expressions they can make to Heaven of their Gratitude in performing all the publick and the private Vows they made, in putting the highest Value upon that Happiness they were deprived of, and of which they are now again possessed; and by an exact providing on their Parts, that the like Calamity may never again prevail over them; they ought to give Notice of this miraculous Mercy and Deliverance to all the Corners of the Earth, inform all Neighbouring Nations of all the Circumstances of it, that prosperous and proud Oppressors may, in the Height of their Tyranny, and tyrannical Conquests, be terrified with the Apprehension of God's Vengeance which hangs over their Heads, and that all the World may be invited thereby to admire and love a People to whom Heaven is so kind and loving. If such a Gratitude as this be shewed, if there once appears a National Acknowledgment of God's Goodness towards them, the same Power will preserve and defend its own Work, remove all Jealousies amongst themselves which would disturb their Peace, and dispose their Neighbours to desire their Friendship to whom God is so much a Friend; this would make the Happiness of Kingdoms perpetual, and inferior only to that which is to be enjoyed in the Kingdom above. But there is too much Cause to fear, that Kingdoms and Nations are as far from this devout Gratitude, as private Persons can be; that they abound in the same Pride and Envy, and Presumption, as particular Men do, and as little remember the Benefits they have received, and the Circumstances with which they received them; the Sense of all their former Sufferings is drowned in the licentious Excess of their present Joy, or, which is worse, in the undervaluing the Benefit of the Change; they forget all their past Vows and Professions, and impute the Alteration to the natural Vicissitude of human Affairs: They are far enough from attributing what is but just and due to the Activity, and Industry, and Fidelity of particular Men, whom God hath chosen for Instruments towards bringing his Work to pass; a little Malice, a little Envy wipes away all Thought of such Obligations; and it is well if it be so quite wiped away, that it be not remember'd to their Prejudice, that they do not fare the worse for the little Merit they have. Yet they are as far from casting up their Eyes to Heaven, as the Place from whence those Blessings were poured down upon them, or considering what they ought to send up thither in return for what they have received, or remembering any of those Promises they did send thither in their deep Agony and Distress: And it is to be wished, that they would well weigh how much this Disease is more Epidemical in a State and Nation, than it is in any particular Man; how much more Penal the foul and impious Ingratitude of a whole Kingdom must be, than the most impudent Forgetfulness of any private Man can be; that they would consider how soon God can deface the Beauty he hath given; that they would conclude by the incredible Expedition he did use in their Preservation, and their Restitution, that he can in a Moment reduce them into a worse Condition, a

much worse Condition than that was from which upon their Supplication he did deliver them, and that they have Reason every Moment to expect that Reduction.

Whether it be a Nation, or whether it be a particular ungrateful Man, that thus provokes the Divine Justice, that will not return so cheap an Acknowledgment as Praise and Thanksgiving for all the Benefits they have received, God will put them in mind of it, when remembering it will do them no good, when their Pains and Calamities shall make them cry to him, which their Devotion could not do. He shall not need to put himself to any Trouble to afflict them, to stretch out his own Arm to hurt them; though it be more grateful to his excellent Nature to awaken Men with his Bounty, than with his Chastisement; yet he can punish with as little Noise as he can relieve; it is but withdrawing himself, giving them up to their own Hearts Desire, letting them walk in their own Counsels, have all they desire to have, and they are insensibly as miserable as their most outrageous Enemies desire to see them. The oldest and most obstinate Sinners have the same Desires, the same childish Desires which little Children have; they wish to be let alone, and God gratifies them, and lets them alone, and wo unto their being so left. There is not a more terrible Denunciation of Judgment and Vengeance in all the most heighten'd Expressions of the Prophets, than in that unconcerned Determination and Declaration which he makes in the Prophet *Ezekiel*, after all other Experiments and Expedients had failed: *I will make my fury towards thee to rest, and my jealousy shall depart from thee, and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry.* * All his Threats and Menaces, all the Strokes of his Displeasure, and all the Mortification they had undergone by it, was not so intolerable as this Cessation of his Fury, this Departure of his Jealousy, and this Quietness and laying aside his Anger was. Whilst he had any Kindness left, any good Purposes towards her, he was jealous for *Sion* with great Jealousy, and he was jealous for her with great Fury; the Kindness was for ever expired, when the Fury and the Jealousy were extinguished. We are to pray, that he will rather deliver us up to our worst Enemies than give us up to our selves, to our own Heart's Desire; that he will rather consume us with his Anger, than be no more angry with us. Let us take heed in Time, that we do not provoke him to this Quietness; and let us early disclaim and abhor all our own Inventions, lest he gives us up to them. Let us renounce the best of our Actions, otherwise than as we acknowledge we were guided into them by his Grace and Providence; and it is much better that he should deprive us of our Prosperity, and our Peace, than he should suffer us to imagine that we owe the least Ingredient of it to our selves, to our own Contrivances. No Idolatry was ever more gross, and more abominable, than the worshipping our selves will be, magnifying our own Abilities for attaining what he hath bestowed upon us, because we had no Ability to attain it, or imagining that we can enjoy them one Minute after he hath left us to our selves.

O Most glorious God, who hast by thy Omnipotence created us out of the Dust of the Earth, so that we have not the least Pretence to Beauty or Comeliness, but as we are the work of thy own Hands, and in which thou wert pleased to take Delight; who mightest have placed us in some Wilderness, and uninhabited Part of the World, where

where many Men yet live out their Days in as much Ignorance of thee, and thy Power, as the Beasts on which they feed: But thou hast vouchsafed to plant us in a Country where we enjoy all the good Things of this World: thou hast exercised us with thy Judgments for our Sins against thee, and for some Time deprived us of that pleasant and beautiful Country, and deprived them of the Pleasure and Beauty of it, who did continue still to inhabit it, and hast again restored us to the full Possession, and Use and Benefit of that fertile Land. Infuse into our Hearts a true and pious Joy for this thy great Blessing, that we may make such an humble Acknowledgment to all Men, that they may see that we attribute it wholly to thy fatherly Compassion towards us, without the least vain Imagination that we contributed any thing to it by our own Inventions. Suffer us never to provoke thee again to the same Severity by any vain or proud Imagination that we can subsist one Minute without thy upholding; but continue thy Protection and Care towards us, and never give us up to our own Hearts Lusts, nor let thy Jealousy depart from us. Amen.

P S A L M LXXXII.

A Divine sentence is in the lips of the king, his mouth transgresseth not in judgment, says * Solomon; and it is great Pity it should, for the Throne is established by Righteousness. It is no Diminution of the Power, and Prerogative, or Independence of Kings, nor a Diminution of the Submission and Obedience of Subjects, nor any Excuse for their withdrawing or lessening that Submission or Obedience; that Kings are not made for themselves, to gratify their own Ambition and exorbitant Passions in the ruling and over-ruling those who are under them, according to their Fancy and Appetite. God hath erected that high Office for the Benefit and Ease of his People, for the forming of their Manners, and reforming their corrupt Inclinations, that they may live sociably together; for their Protection from being oppressed by those who are too strong for them, and for the Preservation of Peace between themselves, by the Peoples entire and absolutely obeying their King, and his just and impartial governing them according to the Rules and Obligations of Justice; so that in a word, they are raised to that high Office and Dignity, and that Office is to do Justice. Kings have an absolute and just Superiority over their Subjects; they have Power to do Wrong, but their Power was not given them to that Purpose, they will find themselves the weaker for it. Power well and justly used, grows the stronger and more vigorous by the Exercise of it; if it be vitiously applied, instead of protecting in oppressing those they should defend from Oppression, it fares with it as it is with a strong and healthy Constitution, which by its own Excesses brings it self to the greatest Weakness: And as the Strength of such a Constitution, and firm Composition of Nerves and Sinews, can struggle long with Diseases, even after it hath lost some of its primitive Vigor; so Crowns and Thrones have many Strings to uphold them, and keep them from falling, though some of them are loose, and some of them are broken; but they are
esta-

* Prov. xvi. 10. 12.

established only by Justice; that, and that alone, supports them firmly, without tottering, or so much as shaking. There is a great Difference between Submission and Obedience, though they are too often taken for the same; and many Princes are so unskilful as to think themselves safe enough in the former, and care not to know the Difference; whereas Submission proceeds only from a Defect of Power, and Strength to resist and contend. He that is weak, after he hath struggled all he can, spent all his Spirits in contending, may repine and murmur, but he must submit to the stronger. Fear and Impotence, and sometimes Folly and Laziness, are the natural Parents of Submission. It is a waste and unprofitable Ground which Lords and Tenants may take in, and inclose at their Pleasure, and may improve with Husbandry; and great, and powerful, and unjust Subjects, find as absolute Submission from their Neighbours, as the best Kings can do from the best Subjects. The greatest Tyrants meet with the greatest Submission, and Men do all they command, because they must, and dare not but do it all. But Obedience is the Child of Choice, and Love is a noble Affection of the Heart, that results from Duty and Conscience, or rather from the Conscience of Duty: It confesses indeed an Inferiority in Degree, but at the same time it is wise enough to discern, that a great Power and Dominion to himself is an Effect and Result from that Obedience. The poorest Man findeth the Subjection of his own Family to his Commands, his Power over his Wife and Children, in reprehending and chastising them, and owes all this Dominion to the Obedience he pays to his Prince. It is not a common natural Affection that accidentally flows from human Nature, as Hope and Fear, and other Passions, which often die as soon as they are born, but is a Habit that is begotten by Wisdom, and is attended by Joy and Delight. Command it self hath not always that Cheerfulness with it as true Obedience hath, because it hath seldom that Innocence; and it is this Obedience that is the Support and Security of Kings and Princes: It is this Obedience that God himself infuses, and breathes into the Hearts of Kings for their chief Support and Security; and this Obedience is improved and confirmed, and can only be preserved by Justice, and therefore the Throne is established by Justice; that Justice constitutes that Obedience.

As then the Administration of Justice is the great Office of Kings, and the principal Cause of God's erecting and instituting that Office, the natural Effect of that Justice being the Performance of all Duty to his Divine Majesty, the Founder and Defender of Kings; so the executing this Part, the doing Justice to all Degrees of Men, is the most difficult Part in all their Administration. Kings are not only to do Justice themselves, which the Sincerity and Integrity of their own Hearts can sufficiently qualify them to do, with that divine Assistance which is never absent from them, there would be little Difficulty in that; but they are to provide that Justice be done by other Men; depute and make such Judges as may diligently and faithfully discharge that Part of his Office for him, and which it is not possible for him to do in his own Person; the Justice is his, and they must execute it for him with all Rectitude and Exactness; and if they fail, if Justice be not impartially administered, the King will hardly be reputed to be without some Fault, and he is sure to undergo the greatest Damage by it. And therefore as it concerns the King to be exceedingly careful in the Choice of his Judges, that they be Men of great Abilities, to discern and know what

is right, as well as of Integrity to do nothing but what is exactly so; because he puts not only his own Power, but his own Trust, the Trust which God hath reposed in him, into their Hands; makes them his Deputies to do all that he would or could do in those Transactions. So it is of a terrible Concernment to them, to be very vigilant in discharging that Trust of God's and the King's; and the more, because as the King hath parted with the highest Branch of his Sovereignty to them, for to execute Justice is so; so God hath with that Deputation from the King, imparted that Superiority and Prerogative of his own, that he hath not so immediately assigned to the Persons of Kings themselves, in giving them Authority in a manner over the Life and Death of their Fellow Subjects. As the Throne is established by Righteousness, that is, by Justice, no Man can be more solicitous to preserve his own Estate, or his Life, than he will be to preserve and establish the Throne, which by Justice secures both his Estate and Life; so the King by Judgment establisheth the Land: By making a judicial Choice of learned and honest Judges, by carefully providing for the doing of Justice, he establisheth the Land: Justice unites the People of the Land to him, makes them in Love with their own Condition, and therefore the more in Love with him; they do not desire that his Power and Authority should be less, for fear there should be less Justice too: Nay, it hath an Influence upon the insensible Land it self: Justice makes the barren Soil fruitful, raises the Spirits of the Husbandman, makes him contend against Nature, and by his Industry makes that Land fertile which she made barren: When Justice hath provided that he shall enjoy the whole Benefit of his own Labour, he will not think he can labour enough: Whereas where Justice is not, the fertilest Land becomes barren, lies neglected, and no Man cares to manure that Earth, the Fruit whereof must go to the Benefit of other Men. The King hath done all he can towards the conferring this inestimable Benefit upon his Subjects, when he hath with Care and Wisdom, and due Examination, constituted such Judges as are worthy of that Trust; Men who in the course of their Lives, have appeared Lovers of Justice, and to be superior to Corruption: And if such Men do not perform their Duties, he is absolved from the Guilt, though he cannot but undergo some part of the Punishment. When Justice is perverted, the whole Foundations of the Earth are out of Course, all Men suffer by it, by undergoing, or fearing it, which is as uneasy; and the Interest of Prince as well as People, is shaken and endangered.

The Consequence and Effects then of the evil Administration of Justice being so pernicious, that it shakes the Security of King and Subject; they who are invested with that Authority, and made Judges of the Land, ought to be very sensible of the great Province that is committed to them; that they are entrusted with no less than a Power to preserve or demolish the very Foundation of the Government: That it is in their Power to exalt the King, who hath exalted them, by making his Subjects delight in their Subjection, and extol his Government, in which he hath provided so well for Justice; by making him acceptable to God himself, in that his Ears are not troubled with the Lamentation and Cries of the Oppressed: And what Honour and Rewards shall such Judges have in Heaven, and upon Earth, who are the Instruments of such Harmony! On the contrary, what Punishment in this World, and the World to come, do those Judges deserve, who by breaking their Trust, not

performing their Duty, lessen and abate the Affection and Duty of Subjects towards their Kings, and slacken the Reins of Government in the Hands of the King, that he cannot guide them into, nor guide them in those ways which lead to both their Happiness, because Justice is not administered unto them; all the Cheerfulness and Delight in Obedience is lost, when there is no Justice. Judges should remember that they cannot judge at all, if the King be not present with them, if they have not his Commission with them; and then they will the more carefully behave themselves, as in his Presence, and be as circumspect in their Carriage at *Westminster* as in *Whitehall*; but they will be more circumspect, if they remember and consider well, that God himself is present in their Courts of Justice, sits upon their Benches with them; he is so concerned, so solicitous that Justice be done, that he will be present when it is done; though he will not be a Witness in the Cause, that Favour and Partiality may be used, he will be a Witness against the Judge who is byassed by those Affections. He is present there, to assist those Judges who do in the Integrity of their Hearts, desire to do Justice; he assists them with discerning Faculties in the most difficult Cases, he makes them see clearly through the Mists, and Subtilties, and Perplexities in which the Wit and Malice of Men would wrap up, and disguise the Causes which are before them. Judges who use Diligence and Industry in the Discharge of their Trust, and truly abhor to do Wrong, do many times find themselves enabled, and even inspired in pronouncing their Sentence and Judgment with an Evidence of Reason and Wisdom that exceeds their ordinary Understanding; and that their Abilities are greater upon the Bench in the Seat of Justice, than in their Chambers, or in other Places: So propitious is divine Justice to contribute to the Discharge of Justice in inferior Courts; insomuch as Injustice hath rarely happened, even in the most difficult Cases, by the Weakness and want of Skill in an entire Judge, who will take Time to ask Advice of those who are able to give it; or if he hath erred in Judgment, will not be ashamed to confess and reverse it. God is present to assist good Judges with Courage and Resolution against all Respect of Persons, which is the highest and most dishonourable Corruption, and most unworthy of a Judge; when the Poor and the Fatherless shall be therefore made more miserable, because they are Poor and Fatherless; and when great Men shall oppress and do them Wrong, only because they are great Men; and Judges dare not see Right done, for fear that they will be able to do them Wrong. There cannot be a greater Scandal and Reproach upon a Kingdom, nor a greater Presage of Ruin to a Kingdom, than when a Subject shall be able to fly above the Reach of Justice; when great Men are qualified to do Wrong, and poor Men obliged to submit to it, and Judges look on and do not remedy it; do not, I say, for they must not say, they cannot say, they cannot. It is the Office of Judges not only to relieve those who come to demand Justice, but to discover those who terrify them from demanding it, who silence their Complaints for Injuries received with Threats of greater Oppressions. A Judge is armed to grapple with these proud Contemners of Justice, and he ought to find them out, that they may be punished, as well as to punish them when they are found out. God himself took the Pains to come down from Heaven to enquire and search after some enormous Wickedness upon Earth, and Kings must be inquisitive to find out the Wickedness that lies hid, as well as to punish that that triumphs in the Sun;

Sun; and they appoint their Judges not only to determine the Causes that are brought before them, but to examine and find out that which is not brought before them; to discover and remove the Obstructions of Justice, as well as to observe the Rules of Justice in their own Determinations. Justice is then in its brightest Lustre, and shines as clear in the Night as in the Day, when great and powerful Offenders are subdued by it, and subdued to it; and when the poorest Man enjoys what is his own, with the same Security, and with as little Apprehension of being deprived of it, as the greatest Man hath. To conclude, as good Judges do by their Vigilance and Sincerity in a manner protect the King; they protect him from the Cry of Oppression, and from the Complaint of Injustice; so Kings must countenance and protect them in doing their Duties, in performing that hard and hazardous Part of their Duty, in which they anger and grieve Men who are greater and more powerful than themselves, and who will attempt all Ways to do them Mischief, by making such Men know, that they who will not submit to Justice, rebel against the King's own Person, and they who connive at it, are Accessaries to it; and must believe that their own greatest Security is in observing the Obligations of Justice themselves, and in all other Mens not daring to violate it.

GOOD God, infuse into the Hearts of Kings and Princes a Love and Esteem of Justice, as that which can only establish their Throne, and unite their Subjects in a chearful Obedience to them, and a Care to chuse able and good Men for the Administration of Justice to their People, and for defending them from Oppression and Wrong; and infuse likewise into all Judges the Spirit of Wisdom, of Justice, and of Courage, that they may execute the high Trust reposed in them for the Honour of the King, and the Peace and Security of the Kingdom, and the Salvation of their own Souls. Let them have so much Respect for thee, that they may have none for the Qualities of Men, or the Persons of high or low, rich or poor, but administer Justice equally to all, and defend every one from Injury and Oppression, that thou mayst have the Glory, and the King and People the Peace and Security, that with thy Blessing is the Effect of Justice.

P S A L M LXXXIII.

THE greatest Afflictions and Calamities which can befall us, are sent down from Heaven upon us, and we can never find Ease and Deliverance from them, except it be likewise sent down upon us from thence; the Pride and Insolence of our Enemies, and the Injustice and Malice of our Envyers, are Passions infused into them to be exercised upon us; and they are but the Messengers and Instruments of Heaven to chastise us, and can chastise and oppress us no farther than the Limits which are prescribed to them from above; and though they neither know those Limits, nor look upon themselves as any other Instruments than of their own Fury and Revenge; yet when their Malice transports them most, and they desire to make the greatest Progress towards our Destruction, they find their Power suddenly abated, and their Success

not

not answer their Counsels, and cannot or will not imagine the Reason. And very frequently our Enemies are qualified for, and proportioned to those Offences and Transgressions of ours, which have most appeared in the Sight of Divine Providence. States and Kingdoms receive most Prejudice from those Enemies they have most undervalued and despised; and particular Persons seldom undergo so great Oppression, as from Persons whose Power they most contemned, or least apprehended. But the Comfort is, how silent soever God seems to be, how little Notice soever he seems to take of what they do, or what we suffer, when they and we are fit for it, he will make both his Power and his Mercy to appear. Our own Impatience will never relieve us, it will make our Condition the worse, sharpen our Sense of the Pain we undergo, which otherwise would not be so sensible. Our own Stratagems and Devices will never mollify the Hearts, nor enervate the Force of our merciless Enemies, but rather increase their Malice, and heighten their Pride and Perverseness. Our Despair of any Remedy, will not draw God the sooner to give us Succour, nor procure Compassion from them who seek our Destruction; it may break our own Spirits, and so disenable us to bear that which we may endure. But though we can do nothing for our selves to whom we wish so well, our Enemies, who wish all Hurt to us, can bring all this good upon us, and the more by being our implacable Enemies. Their Impatience to destroy us, may hasten his Deliverance: Their multiplied Combinations against us, that they may ruin us with the more Expedition, may possibly provoke him the sooner to preserve and redeem us from their Tyranny. Nothing, but our own Humiliation and Repentance, can be so sure a Presage of our Recovery and Redemption, as the Increase and Growth of our Enemies Pride and Insolence is; their arrogant Presumption that we cannot escape their Hands, is a very good Earnest that they shall not long exercise their Authority over us. God is content to use their Service towards our Reduction, to humble us by their Pride, to disappoint and demolish all the Structures our Policy and Wisdom have raised or designed by their Rudeness and Ignorance, and to mortify us by their Oppression: But when he finds they are so much delighted with the Work they are employed in, that they think of gratifying their own Passion and Appetite in our final Destruction; when they increase their Conspiracy and Combination, by drawing into their Assistance those whom he hath not stirred up, that they may be sure to extirpate those whom he would but chastise; as he first subjected us to them, out of his Displeasure to us, not out of his Good-Will to them; so he will likewise subdue them, take away their Power to do hurt; not so much out of his being reconciled to us, which he can only be by our Repentance, and our own good Behaviour, as his Indignation against them, for using the Power he trusted them with so exorbitantly; and then he will expose them to the same Calamities which they have been so well pleased to see others in, and, it may be, make an Experiment of the Temper and Moderation of those he hath delivered, by giving them Power to make their Afflictions more grievous to them; and therefore it concerns them not to be too much exalted.

God doth not always use the same Method in delivering those who groan under great Oppressions, and whom he doth intend to deliver, nor the same Measures in converting or reducing those who please and extol themselves in their Ability and Power to oppress: As the Time of

his doing either, cannot be presumed upon by those who are most concerned, so his Way and Manner of doing it can be no more discovered till he publishes it himself, and it depends most upon the gracious Intention he hath towards both the Oppressor and the Oppressed: His mildest and most gracious Way is in converting the Wrong-Doers, those who take Counsel together, and consult how they may oppress the innocent, and are contented and pleased when they have brought it to pass, by making them detest their own savage Inclinations, by presenting such a Prospect to their View of their own corrupt Affections and foul Injustice, as may fill their Faces with Shame, and make them blush and tremble at their own Deformity. It is a blessed Shame, which is the Mother of Confidence enough to go to God Almighty to ask his Pardon and Forgiveness for offending him in wronging their Brother; and so by reconciling themselves to him, they suppress and extinguish all Inclination and Appetite to the same Excesses. This is a Reduction very agreeable to the Divine Clemency, when it finds Natures and Dispositions suitable, and which are susceptible of such good Impressions, that he may relieve and restore, and repair the Oppressed, without the Destruction of the Oppressor; and yet with Security that he will never more desire to oppress, that he doth more abhor the Injustice he hath acted, than any Injustice he can suffer; in such Cases, God disposes the Minds of those who have been wronged, who have received the Injury, to wipe out of their Memory all the Marks of any Reproach and Indignity, or Damage; and such a Reconciliation is more grateful to them, than any other Reparation or Deliverance could be. This produces a perfect Reformation of Affections and Manners in both, and a perfect Conversion of both, and leaves no more Appetite in the one to do, than in the other to suffer any Wrong, and adds a Lustre to Christianity it self. But if Success in Wickedness hath raised the Hearts of Men above this Temper, and they continue to despise all those whom they have depressed, (as Pride is usually the last Passion that leaves the Heart that hath prospered in Iniquity, as Repentance is the last Affection that enters into it) if they will not be so modest as to admit Shame to fill their Faces, he will put them to shame in their Destruction and Ruin: Since they will not admit and entertain that soft Approach of his Grace towards their Conversion, he hath a rougher Remedy to apply to their impetuous Current; he will terrify them with the Tempest of his Anger, and the Storms of his just Indignation; he will confound them in his Justice, leave them with Inclination and Appetite to do Mischief, and so under the Guilt of having done it, and deprive them of the Power to do it, and of the Delight they would take in doing it, without the Satisfaction of having abstained from it.

O Most merciful God, who hast not enjoined the Practice of any one Christian Duty to those who assume that Appellation of Christians, with more Solemnity than that of Charity, that we must love one another; root we beseech thee out of our Hearts all corrupt Inclinations to afflict and grieve our Brethren: Keep us from contriving with other Men to bring Prejudice upon them, either by Calumnies upon their Reputation, or by Injustice upon their Fortunes; and if through Passion or Inadvertency we do at any time yield to such a Temptation, recal us presently to a Shame that may recal us to Repentance, that thou may'st forgive

give us, and dispose those whom we have injured to forgive us too. Preserve us from such unjust Desires to oppress other Men, and preserve us from their Power who desire to oppress us; and if thou dost subject us to their Will, defend us from any Impatience or unworthy Contrivance even to free our selves from that Oppression, but give us Patience to wait for thy Deliverance; and if our Enemies shall be ashamed of their Transgressions before thee, and sorry for the Wrong they have done to us, let us never forget the Obligations which are upon us to forgive them, by thy having so often forgiven us; and upon their renouncing all Thought of farther grieving us, let us renounce all Anger and Displeasure towards them, and pray to thee for them, as for our selves. Amen.

P S A L M LXXXIV.

GOD Almighty is content when he speaks to us, to use the same Expressions, and the same Language which we use to one another; and that we may the better comprehend his wonderful Kindness and Passion for Mankind, he vouchsafes to own the same Affections, and even the same Weakness which we our selves are transported with. Thus upon several Occasions he declares, that he is sorrowful and grieved, and joyed and delighted, (Affections which can have no Influence upon his Divine Excellence) that we may by the Measure of our own Joy and Sorrow, and by the Content we find in the one, and Trouble from the other, the better comprehend how he is pleased or displeased in those Occasions to which he applies such Expressions; and he is not offended, if we in like manner illustrate our weak Conceptions of his infinite Majesty, and of Heaven it self, and the Greatness and Pleasure thereof, in the Terms we use to express the Things we most admire upon the Earth, the Greatness and Power of Kings, and the Attributes we give to them, and the highest Joy and Delight which we can imagine the Heart of a pious Man can be ravished and transported with in this World: And therefore though some Learned Men believe this Psalm to be prophetically written of the Impatience the People had in one of the Captivities, to return to *Jerusalem*, principally that they might pay their Devotion to God in his Temple, and so extolled that happy State; yet many more of the same Rank think this Psalm to be compiled in a devout Contemplation of the Joys of Heaven, and the Happiness which they enjoy who are admitted into that Mansion; they say, the Air of this Psalm is softer, the Expressions and Language calmer, gentler, and less disturbed, than in those Psalms which relate to any of the Captivities. They compare therefore this to the Forty second, *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God*; which they look upon as a Contemplation of the beatifical Vision. There will be no Inconvenience in considering it as referring to either; and as there are some Expressions too high for the Earthly *Jerusalem*, so there are some too low for the Heavenly.

There cannot be a greater Resemblance to the Joys of Heaven in any Pleasure or Happiness that we can enjoy in this World, than in that Tranquility of Mind and Conscience which naturally attends and accom-

companies our fervent Devotions to God Almighty: When we have deposited all our Wishes with him, and submitted and resigned all our Desires to him, and when we have an inward Sense and Feeling of his Acceptation of our Addresses, which we are sure not to be without, if our Addresses and Devotions are as sincere and entire as we pretend they are. Nor can there be a more lively Representation upon Earth, of the Court and Company of Heaven, than in the Assemblies and Congregations of religious and pious Men pouring out their Prayers, and celebrating the Praises of their Creator and Redeemer, in Churches decently kept, and beautified as they ought to be: There we have even a Sight of God, and behold his Hands reached out to help and support our Weakness; and if we behave our selves there with that Circumspection, Awe and Reverence, as if we believed that we are in his Presence, and all our Actions, and Gestures, and Thoughts are suitable to that Belief, we shall return from thence with a Joy and Comfort that we can no more express, than we can apprehend the Pleasure and Delight of Angels to be superior to what we then enjoy: All the other Joys, and Pleasures, and Happineses of, and in this World, have their Satiety, we are weary of them by possessing them: The Heathen Orator could say, *rerum omnium satietas, vitæ facit satietatem*, we grow weary of Life it self, by having enjoyed all the Pleasures of Life: But in our Devotions to Heaven, in our magnifying the Power and Mercy of God, in our Acknowledgment of his Goodness and frequent Deliverances, and in our earnest Prayers that he will continue that his Protection to us, that he will defend us from our Enemies, and give us all Things that are fit for us, there is no Satiety, we can never be weary of making those Addresses; if our Spirits are ready to faint, they are instantly revived, and we end with more Vigor than we begun: It is the only Business we are sent for into this World, and the only Business in the World of which we cannot be weary. The Reason why any Man finds himself weary in his Devotions, is because he is not devout: We first cease to be intent upon what we came to Church for, or it may be came thither without any other Intention than to be seen there, and then it is no wonder that we grow quickly weary of being there; and yet even then there is such a wholesome Infection in and from the very Place, that we often find that Men who come not thither out of Devotion, and stay not there with Delight, grow by degrees to be affected with it, and insensibly to attain to a true Love of God Almighty by being there, which they had not when they came thither. Hypocrisy may carry Men to Church, and stick too close to them whilst they are there; and being so like Religion in the Eyes of other Men, often affects and transports the Person himself, that he sometimes believes he is Religious; but a constant being there, is the best Cure even for that mortal Malady. It is a very hard Matter for the most wicked Person to retain such an entire Possession of all the vain and impious Thoughts of his Heart in a pious and Christian Congregation, as to shut out all manner of Influence of God's Grace upon him, and to reject all Approaches of his Divine Spirit. Some Consideration of the uneasy Condition of his own unlimited Extravagancy; some Reflection upon the Behaviour and Devotion of other Men (even when he most contemns both it and them) will insensibly break in upon him, and struggle with all his Perverseness, till it hath awakened him out of his Lethargy, and prevailed with him to think more seriously of what he hath so often laughed at.

The

The Heathen Philosopher was of Opinion that there was nothing had so great and powerful an Operation upon the Minds of Men, or so manifestly reduced the most corrupt Inclinations to Virtue, as, *Bonorum Virorum conversatio, paulatim enim descendit in pectora, & vim præceptorum obtinet*; as Vice too often insinuates it self without being discerned, so Men are sometimes reformed before they are aware of it; *non deprehendes quemadmodum, aut quando tibi prosit, profuisse deprehendes*; Men find as evident an Improvement of their Understanding, a less Inclination to, and then an Aversion from Vice, a Propension and Disposition to what is Good, without knowing the precise Time of their Conversion, or taking Notice of their infant Piety. *Est aliquid quod ex magno viro, vel tacente proficias*, says the same Philosopher in the same Place; we sometimes see a Voice that we cannot hear; and beneficially imagine that a Man speaks to us, when he does but look upon us. And as there is this Advantage from the Persons of excellent Men, so the Advantage may be much improved by the Place where they and we are. As there are unwholsome Airs which work upon the Spirits, and impair the Health; and no Air so Pestilential as in those Places where Wickedness is owned, professed and propagated; so there are pure and grateful Airs which refresh the Spirits, and give a sensible Vigor to Mind and Body; and there cannot be a purer, a more healthy Air, than in God's own House, a Place that he chuses more particularly to inhabit and reside in, where the united Devotions of pious Men raise such a sweet-smelling Savour in the Nostrils of God himself, that it is a kind of Heaven upon Earth to be present in them; and he hath a Soul very insensible of the Influence of Heaven, that doth not feel a more fresh and lively Delight in those short Seasons, than in an Age spent in Idleness and Luxury, and in the rankest Pleasures which are industriously applied to the Corruption of human Nature.

But as the nearest Types never come near the Excellency of the Things they prefigure, so nothing in Thought, Word or Deed, which the most exact Integrity and Perfection can arrive to in this World, can make us comprehend or imagine the least Relish of those unspeakable Joys of Heaven, which neither Eye hath seen, nor Ear hath heard, nor Tongue can express: And methinks that Declaration of the Spirit of God himself, should be a Bit and Bridle to restrain the over-active Fancies and Imaginations of Men, which endeavour to make a Representation to our Senses of that unutterable and unconceivable Bliss and Repose; and it may be the Pains they take, and the Expressions they use to make those Descriptions, in which they borrow all the Comparisons and Similitudes from Poets, and their own poetical Glosses upon Poetry, apply all the luscious Insinuations from the grossest Pleasures, makes Heaven less considered and revered than it would otherwise be, and looked upon as adorned by those gaudy Discourses, and a Place of meer Fancy and Imagination. Let us not therefore labour to make Words comprehend that which Words were not made for, nor to describe to others what is not capable of Description; but within our selves, and in our own Conceptions make such Reflections upon it, as may most naturally dispose our Affections, and raise our Appetites to such a Desire and Impatience to be there, that we may be even weary of that best and pleasantest part of our Life, that is least troubled with those Accidents which make Life grievous. Let us look upon Heaven as a Climate, where there is no change of Weather, no boisterous Storms,

Storms, or malignant Blasts to disturb the sweet Calm and Repose that we once enjoy; whatsoever we have once, we have always. Health, which is the greatest Blessing in this World, and gives a Relish to all other Blessings, is liable to many Diseases and Accidents which may in an Instant deprive us of it; and if the Strength and Vigor of Youth shut out those Apprehensions, we have Age in our View, which every Day approaches towards us with more Expedition; and the daily Sight of those who have gone before us, and have lost their Memory, and Judgment, and Understanding, which can only make Age venerable to others, and tolerable to our selves, anticipates our Misery, and at least allays the Pleasure and Sense of our present Condition. Plenty, which is a great additional Blessing to the other of Health, which gives us all the Conveniencies our Affections can desire, and which Plenty can purchase, and which is the highest and noblest Prerogative of Plenty, an Ability to do good, and to oblige others, is subject to the Violence of those who have Power to take it from us, and who are only provoked by it to do us Injuries; to the Fraud and Rapine of other Men, to the Rage and Anger of all the Elements, which can in a Moment sweep it from us; and if we are preserved from all these Assaults, a little Pain or Sickness, from which we can hardly be preserved, abolishes all the Taste, and Relish, and Pleasure of and in this beloved Plenty; and the Expectation or Fear of all these disquiets and torments us out of the Sense of it, whilst we possess it; as nothing is more common than to see Men lose all the Benefit and Comfort of what they have, out of a miserable Fear that they shall lose it. A good Name and Reputation, worthily and innocently attained, and therefore like to last to Posterity, and which is the Salvation of this World, is in danger to be traduced and calumniated by every rude Tongue, and the Malice and Envy of every confident and bold Detractor can fully it, and a general Conspiracy of powerful Adversaries take it away, or at best eclipse and cloud it. Lastly, the very Innocence and Integrity of our Devotions, in the Contemplation of God's Greatness and his Goodness, and in the most dutiful Acknowledgment of it to him in our pious Supplications, which raises us to the highest pitch of Delight in this World, cannot continue long, by the Temptations and Distractions of the World, and the Weakness and Weariness of our own Spirits, which cannot bear a continual bending: Nor is it a small Allay to the joyful Extasy of that Contemplation, to see so much Wickedness in the Practice of Men, as if they did really believe there was neither Heaven or Hell: But there are none of these Allays in Heaven, no such Vicissitudes; and we have brought it near enough to our Comprehension, when we believe that a greater Vigor of Health than ever our Youth enjoyed, shall be eternally possessed by us, without a Possibility of being impaired: That the Plenty which supplied us with all we wanted, and all we wished for, was Beggary, in Comparison of the Plenty we shall then have, without Danger or Fear of Diminution: That our good Name and Reputation shall be confessed and celebrated by the Tongues of Angels, without the Presence of one Detractor to the end of the World; and that the short Satisfaction we ever felt from the Payment of our Duty to Heaven, shall be a lasting Extasy of Joy, Praise and Thanksgiving to all Eternity.

O Lord God, infuse thy Grace into our Hearts, that we may always remember and consider that this World is only a Passage to the next; and therefore that it is as indecent and as unprofitable to be idle, and to loyter in it, as in any other Journey; that all the Pleasures of it, and in it, are but the Pleasures of an Inn, and must not interrupt our making Haste to our Resting-place: That this Life is but a troubled Sea, through which we make our Voyage to another, and a better; and that according to the Freight we carry with us, our Reception and Entertainment shall be there; where the Delight and Benefit of one Hour, is infinitely greater than all the most innocent and righteous Pleasures of this World during our Lives; and let us never enjoy even the greatest Perfection of those with any other Content, than as they are the Forerunners and Earnest of what is inestimable in the next Life. Amen.

P S A L M LXXXV.

THERE is not a greater Happiness and Blessing in this World, than the enjoying that Freedom and Liberty which innocent Nature hath a Title to, and a Desire of; as a Restraint of that Liberty, and taking away of that Freedom, is the greatest Misery, and affects the Mind with greater Trouble and Melancholy than any other Affliction, or it may be than Death it self: And let the Stoicks say what they will, that the Mind cannot be taken Prisoner, cannot be put in Banishment, that it has always Freedom, and cannot be deprived of it, it is not true: And though a very virtuous Habit of Mind, which can controul the Passions, and subdue the Appetites of the Body, can administer some Comfort and Relief in Imprisonment, and allay the sharp Regret of Banishment, yet it is sensible of Oppression, and even feels Imprisonment; it is deprived of that Diet and Exercise which preserved and contributed to its Health and Vigor, as much as the Body is; and he that finds it otherwise, I mean, he who knows no Difference within himself between Liberty and Imprisonment, owes the Satisfaction he enjoys to the ill Constitution, not to any Perfection of his Mind: God created in Man a Delight in Communication, and therefore provided Company for him, as soon as he had made him, and a Restraint of that Liberty is a Violation of Nature, and therefore must be very grievous. What Comfort and Delight hath the most covetous Person in the great Plenty of his Estate, and the strongest and most vigorous Man in his Health, when he hath no Liberty to enjoy those, but is confined to a close Prison from whence he cannot exempt himself? And therefore those States and Kingdoms are best founded, where Care is taken that the Liberty of Mens Persons be preserved from all Restraints: But when the Peace and Justice of the Kingdom finds that Liberty cannot consist with either, the depriving Men of the natural Liberty of their Persons is the highest Calamity, and Prologue to all the rest. It was God's own Method of punishing his beloved Nation, when he laid all other Afflictions upon them without Effect; he took away their Liberty from them, sometimes by making them Slaves in their own Country, subjecting them to the Power of their Neigh'bours, who laid heavy Impositions and Bur-

thens upon them; and when their Perverseness and Obstinacy would not be subdued by that Remedy, he gave them into Captivity, put them into the Hands of a People mightier than they, who carried them from their own Country into a strange Land: And then when the Fierceness of his Anger was abated, when they had made themselves worthy of his Pardon by Repentance, and Promise of future Integrity, he brought them back from this Captivity, and Liberty was their highest Reward when they had done their utmost, and all other Blessings which they were supplied with were but the Effects, and had all their Lustre from their Liberty. No Man is compleatly miserable without the Loss of his Liberty; and in the Loss of that, all Comforts that can be supplied are but Shadows, and without Relish.

We are all sensible enough of this kind of Loss of our Liberty, and need no Aggravations to make a Prison odious to us; we think it too great a Punishment when we most deserve it, and are ready to rescue our selves from it by greater Offences than those which made us liable to it. There needs no Eloquence to raise our Understanding to the sharpest Apprehension of the Miseries of such a Captivity, or of the Affliction of Banishment, though all the World be open to us but our own Country; our Liberty is sweet to us, and our Country is sweet, we would part with neither: But there is a Loss of this precious Liberty, that is more in one's own Power to prevent; there is a Captivity more mischievous and destroying than the Subjection of a Foreign Nation, which we may free our selves from; and yet we are so far from using that Power, from a Desire to preserve our Liberty, that we give our selves up, and affect and contribute to our own Captivity. It is not the narrow Room in a Goal that makes the Imprisonment; small Rooms have their Benefit and Convenience, and many chuse them who are most at liberty; but the Restraint that they cannot go from thence. Many Men are imprison'd in their own Houses, and complain as much of the Confinement, as if they were in a Vault, and as to their Liberty it is an equal Infringement. A great Town is as much a Prison if a Man be committed to it, without Liberty to go out of it, as the County Goal, and it may be is as grievous. They who would not be carried into Foreign Countries in Captivity, would not be deprived of the Liberty to travel thither, and they who abhor Banishment most, would not be restrained from going out of their own Country, and it may be would be as unwilling to be banished into their own Country, as out of it: The not being in their own Disposal, the being restrained from doing what they would chuse to do, having in it all that is grievous in Imprisonment, in Banishment, in Captivity. What shall we then think of not resisting our own Passions, when they assault us in our full Vigor, and when we are able to subdue them; and of our giving our selves up to our most unruly Affections and Appetites, when they carry us away into Actions which are not only unwarrantable, and in the End must be grievous to us; but are not grateful and agreeable to our very natural Desires, and that Virtue and Abstinence that is imprinted in us? A Man is as much a Prisoner in his own House, when his Servants shut the Doors upon him, and will not suffer him to go out, as when he is besieged by an Enemy that keeps him in; and that Restraint is much the more dishonourable. We may be Prisoners likewise in our selves, and no Imprisonment so unworthy, as to be inclosed by our Servants, by our own narrow and fordid Affections; no Captivity so base and dishonourable as to be led away and transported by the unbridled

unbridled Strength and Power of our own Passions and Appetites. Who would not chuse rather to be a Slave to a noble Enemy, to a great and powerful Prince, where Innocence and Honour may be preserved in Servitude, than to be a Slave to his own Anger, which leads him into base Actions of Violence, and impious Acts of Revenge, and then leaves him to the Chastisement of his own Conscience, and to the Justice of the Magistrate, which is less severe. The covetous Man, who will not part with the least to do the greatest good to his Neighbour, and is ready to rebel if a little Money be required of him for his King or Country, is so much a Slave to his Money, so much possessed by it, instead of being the Possessor of it, that he receives no Benefit from it; and from denying it to others, he denies it to himself, and is as poor, and more miserable, than he who lives upon Alms, and begs his Bread from Door to Door. They who cherish the unruly Heat in their Blood, with loose and lascivious Thoughts, and obscene Discourses, to make it more unruly, till it grow into Lust, when a little Reflection and Mortification would have extinguished the first Fire, become so much Slaves to that Lust, that it hurries them into Attempts destructive to Civil Justice, to the Laws of Humanity, and into Contempt of Divinity it self, and makes them more Beasts than they are which live in the Desert. What Impositions doth the insolent haughty Man pay to his Pride? What Exactions doth he suffer from his Ambition? Nay, What Affronts and Indignities doth he suffer from both, in Submission to those who are more haughty than himself, that he may appear great in the Eyes of meaner Men? Let us therefore, if we desire to be free from others, be sure to keep us free from our selves; and if we would not have the Pride and Passion of other Men prevail against us, let us hinder our own Pride and Passion from prevailing upon us. The Fountain of our Liberty is within us; if we keep that from being corrupted or invaded, we shall be the abler to keep it from the Violence and Power of others: But we cannot be too severe and strict in the Guard of it; treating and complying, and compounding with outward Enemies, many times preserves us, and awakens them, but with those within there is no compounding, no complying: No Man ever compounded with his Anger for one single Murther, but it exacted another; nor with his Ambition for one Office or Preferment, but he was in the Instant as sollicitous for more; nor did ever Man extinguish his Lust, by once satisfying it; the Conquest must be entire on one Side, with all the Ensigns of Conquest. If we do not fully subdue, we are entirely subdued, and our Liberty is forever lost.

LORD, thou hast done many Favours to us, and preserved us out of the Hands of our Enemies, give us Grace so to carry our selves towards thee, that our Enemies may never prevail so far over us, as to be able to take away our Liberty from us, much less to carry us away in Captivity into a strange Country; but especially, and with a more particular Eye of thy Providence and Protection, we do beseech thee, that thou wilt defend us from our selves, subdue all our Affections, and Passions, and Appetites to that Temper, that they may not subdue us: Let them never be able to seduce us out of the Paths in which thou hast commanded us to walk, nor pervert our entire Obedience to thee; that thou mayest always speak Peace unto

unto us, and make us confident of thy Salvation, through the Mediation of thy Son. Amen.

P S A L M LXXXVI.

THERE needs not a better Argument to prove that there is fixed in the very Nature of Man a Devotion to and Reverence for God Almighty, than that the worst Men, who think least of him, and take all the Ways they can that they may not think of him, do, in some Exigence of their Life, or at their Death, if they have Warning of it by Sickness or other Summons, make some Address, some such Application to him, as if they believed that they stood in need of him. The Advances of this Kind among the Heathen is very notorious in the deliberate Contemplations of *Plutarch*, *Cicero*, *Seneca*, and the Prayer of *Plato* at his Death; *Causa causarum miserere mei*. And the Inference will be as strong from such who are called *Christians* from the Country wherein they live, and are in truth the more *Gentiles* of the too, and are so much debauched from the Manners and Duty of Christians, that if they think of Christ at all, it is to make themselves merry with him, as *Julian* did, to bring Religion into Contempt, who notwithstanding in every notable Extremity of their Fortune, in every Agony of Pain and Sickness, and the Article of Death, are very desirous to resort to him, if not in fervent Prayer, in violent Exclamation; *O Lord, hear me; O Lord help me*; which proceeds from the Impulsion of Nature it self, without any Impression of Grace: For if God doth hear him, and deliver him, he never thinks more of him, and renounces his very Exclamations, as the Effect of his Fever or other Distemper, and had rather be thought mad, than suspected to be pious; and yet resorts again in the next Extremity, and so is as constant in his Approaches to God, though not so frequent as the pious Man; the one prays continually, the other when he can do nothing else; the one knows he hath always need of Help and Assistance, and so asks it; the other believes that when he cannot help himself, he hath many good Friends who can, and first goes to them, and despairs of their Help, before he applies to God Almighty; and which is then rather a tacit Acknowledgment that he can do him good, than any Confidence or Hope that he will; so that his Religion and Devotion begins and ends in short Exclamations, and melancholy Ejaculations, which terminate in themselves, and never arrive at the Integrity of a Prayer.

But the Piety and Devotion of a good Christian is of another Mould and Making; when he is in most Health, and at most Ease, he thinks he hath most need of God's Help, and is most at his Prayers. Never Man prayed so much as King *David*, who provided in his own Devotions and Prayers Supplications for us in any Extremity we can be liable to, comprehending all that the most happy or the most miserable can stand in need of; and knew well by Experience, that the greatest and happiest Man had most need to be at his Prayers; he knew well the Temptation which great Prosperity always suggests to the Mind of those who possess it, or are possessed by it; how great Operation an unlimited and uncontrollable Power hath upon the Affections, and even the Conscience it self; and that he who hath no such Enemies against whom

he may have Reason to pray for Assistance, hath most Reason to pray for Assistance against himself. When God had most eminently poured out his Blessings upon him, delivered him from the Assaults and Violence of publick and declared Enemies, and from the Machinations and Conspiracies of secret Traytors who had not declared against him; when he had raised him from a low Degree to the highest Pitch of Majesty, and had given him an Assurance, which he had never vouchsafed to any before him, that his Posterity should reign after him, he had still Argument enough left for Prayer; he would have for all this, that God should shew him a Token for good, that he meant all these Blessings for his good: He had seen others exalted as high as himself, and to outward Appearance as strongly fixed as he, and he had seen the same Men tumbled down from that Height to the lowest of Misery and Contempt; and therefore he prayed for a Token that these Blessings should not be a Snare to him to betray him to a Forfeiture of them, by having too much Confidence in them, till he was well assured that they were intended for his good. We cannot be too solicitous in the Article of the greatest Abundance of Power and Plenty that he can shower down upon us by the Favour of Princes, or any other Way, for a Sign that it is for our good; and we cannot have a better Sign and Token than that he hath disposed us to ask it, to pray for it, to depend upon him for it: And then he desired this Token should extend farther, which was a Prayer for his Enemies, that they might take Notice of the Preservations which God had wrought for him, and so give over their Enterprises farther against him; and that by their Observation and Consideration of it, they might recollect themselves, and learn so to submit, and apply themselves to Divine Providence, as to receive the same Bounty and Protection from it.

Prayer is not a formed Exercise of Devotion confined to any Place, or Time, or Posture; God forbid we should no oftner be at our Prayers than we are upon our Knees; and yet it were well if we were in truth really praying, when we are in that Posture of praying: But Prayer is a Habit of Devotion which good Men never put off, and inseparable from the whole Life of a Christian; the Mind is so formed to it, that no Occasion, no Company, no Posture, no Dispatch of Business interrupts it, and keeps it from Prayer: Pray continually, is a Christian Injunction, and a Christian Practice, and gives no Interruption to any honest and justifiable Business of our Vocation; nor can any Place or Presence, or Crowd or Noise, restrain a Man from the Performance of this Duty, that is inclined to do it. He that at the first Opening of his Eyes in a Morning, though it be in the Inquisition it self, or where he hath a Guard upon him to keep him from praying, thinks of God Almighty, and of his Bounty in giving him so sweet a Repose which his Enemies have been without, hath said his Prayers that Morning: That Soldier who in the Field, and in his sharpest and most violent Charge of the Enemy, considers that the Lord of Hosts is General of both Armies, and gives the Victory to him whom he thinks fit, and depends only on him for his Security, hath said his Prayers in the Battel, and whilst he hath been giving Orders aloud for prosecuting the Fight: And that Judge, who upon the Bench remembers the Obligations he hath to do Justice, and the Obligation he hath to God for having preferred him to that Office, before many who are in his Presence, who were fitter and abler to perform it, hath said his Prayers, and begged Assistance from him, in

all that Noise and Clamour of the Bar; and very notable Abilities are acquired from, and by those silent Prayers. He who receives a signal Honour from the King's Hand upon his Royal Throne, and at the same Time recollects that God hath sent it to him by the King's Hand, and expects an exact Performance of his Duty to both, hath said his Prayers in the King's Presence, without offending any Rule of Decency; and he who celebrates his Joy for this Dignity received in the Company of his Friends, and in the greatest Feasts and Jollity, and reflects in his Thoughts upon the Goodness of God in giving him that just Occasion of Joy and Chearfulness, hath said his Prayers in all that Company, without disturbing the Harmony of the Feast. When God hath but once taught us to walk in his Way, and hath united our Heart to his Fear, our Praises of him in devout Acknowledgment of what he hath done for us, and our Prayers to him to continue that Bounty to us, and to make us worthy of it, will be one and the same Service, and will neither interrupt our necessary Business, nor our lawful Mirth. He who heartily desires to pray, hath prayed, in what Posture soever he is; the mental Conceptions and Applications of our Heart being more powerful and efficacious, than any Form of Words can be which are uttered by our Tongue.

O Lord, since there is no Minute of our Lives in which we have not need of thy Help and Assistance, nor any Action or Endeavour of our Lives which hath not Success, or is disappointed by thy Goodwill and Pleasure; let no Minute of our Lives pass without our remembring and considering that thy Protection and Supply; nor let us be engaged in any Action or Endeavour, without seriously reflecting upon the Influence thou must have in the promoting those our Endeavours: And therefore let there be no Part of our Life, without our being solicitous to procure thy Aid, and doing that which may most entitle us to it. Let us not call upon thee only in the Time of our Trouble, nor do thou help us only when we do call upon thee, nor only in those Things for which we call for Help; but give us Grace always to pray to thee, and grant us all thou seest we have Need of, and deny to give us that which we shall be the worse for having. Give us a right Heart towards thee, and then we shall be always praying to thee, and thou wilt always grant our Prayer.

P S A L M LXXXVII.

GOD hath not restrained his Favours or his Bounties from any sort of Men, or Places; nor hath he confined them to any Rank of Men, or Choice of Places, but pours them indifferently to all who call upon him, and wheresoever it is; and yet it cannot be doubted but he hath in all times had a particular Favour and Inclination to some Persons and some Places above others; he hath a more particular Care and Protection for the Persons of Kings and Princes, than for other Men; and a more particular Respect for Churches, and those Places which are built and prepared for his Worship and Service, than for other Places; and

and his Blessings have been frequently conferred more notoriously and more eminently upon one Kingdom than another, and upon one City or Town, more than upon other Places in the same Kingdom. *David* thought that the very Situation of *Jerusalem* was some Evidence and Testimony of God's wonderful Kindness to that City; and his continual and extraordinary Blessings upon it, signally more than upon any other Place in that fruitful Country, which he bestowed upon his own chosen People, made it believed that they were happy who were born there; and it was very visible, that when many other Places underwent great Afflictions of all Kinds, with which he thought fit to punish them, *Jerusalem* was often wonderfully preserved from those Afflictions; and thus far the literal Sense of this Psalm will carry us, without extorting from it any mystical Relation to our Saviour, or the Church.

If it shall please God to give us our Portion in a Kingdom happily seated for the Security and Benefit of the Nation, where Nature administers greater Advantages to it than their Neighbours enjoy; and to assign us a Residence, and an Abiding-place in some fruitful Part of that Kingdom, situated for Health and Plenty above many other Places, and gives this Country the Blessing of Peace, and many other Felicities which other Regions are without, we may very justifiably believe that he hath a particular Favour for this Kingdom, and a more particular Pleasure for that Place, which he hath situated in so pleasant and healthy an Air, and adorned with so many Benefits, that Men think themselves very happy in having been born there; that he is more present in this chosen Place, which he cultivates with so cherishing a Sun, than in other Parts left to unreasonable Inundations and Barrenness. But we must consider then likewise, that where God sows so abundantly, he looks to reap in Proportion; he expects another kind of Harvest from this beautiful, fertile Climate, than from barren Places. If Men spend all these Blessings upon themselves, as if they were sent to them only to enable them to be vain, more luxurious, and more wicked than their Neighbours, who live in a more barren and unwholesome Air; if the Health which they enjoy from the Purity of that Air, do not make their Devotions more pure and vigorous; if the several Blessings which are heaped upon them, do not raise a Sense in them of his wonderful Goodness and Bounty who bestows them, they will find that the Sun, and the Air, and the Earth, will take Revenge upon them, by the ones withholding its Warmth, the other its Purity, and the last its Fertility, from such unworthy and ungrateful Receivers. Let them remember *Jerusalem*, and the pleasant Situation thereof, that it was the Envy of the Earth, and received all the Benefits and Blessings Heaven it self could shower down upon it; and let them behold now how the unparalleled Wickedness of the Inhabitants did not only provoke the Divine Providence to scatter them over the Face of the Earth, without giving them one City of their own to dwell in, but to remove the Health and Beauty, and Fertility of the very Climate; not only to reduce their glorious Structures to a Heap of Stones, but to curse the Earth it self with Barrenness, not inferior to that of the Stones themselves: When God is provoked, he takes Vengeance upon the Places, as well as upon the People.

Mer-

*M*erciful God, amongst all the infinite Blessings and Benefits which thou hast conferred upon us, give us Grace to acknowledge the Pleasantness, and Situation, and Plenty of the Country thou hast allotted to us, superior to most of our Neighbours; and where our Neighbours desire to have their Children born, that they may enjoy the Happiness thereof. Make us, we beseech thee, sensible of this thy great Bounty, and thy Blessing upon the Land in which we live. O let not our Sins and Ingratitude bring down a Curse upon our Country, and drive away the Beauty and Fruitfulness thereof; but make us more worthy of it, and our Posterity that shall succeed us yet more worthy than we have been, that our Country may still be continued in thy particular Favour and Protection: Amen.

P S A L M LXXXVIII.

IF our Impatience and Agony in our greatest and sharpest Sickness, and in our most grievous and intolerable Afflictions and Calamities, produce no worse Effects, than a more vehement Application of our selves to God Almighty, our want of Patience will never be laid to our Charge: And though he well knows the Extent of the Pain we suffer in Sickness, and the full Measure of the Grief we undergo in any Misfortune and Adversity; yet our enlarging upon, and Description of those our Sufferings in fervent Ejaculations and Devotions, are not unacceptable to him; there is a kind of natural Ease in complaining, in giving some Vent to those Pains and Vapours which oppress our Breast and Stomach; and the very Representation of the Agony we are in, with Fervor in our Prayers and Addresses, gives some Vigor to our Devotions, and administers some Ease, in a Confidence that God Almighty hears us, and will have Compassion upon us, when he sees that we have no other Confidence but in him. Silence is a greater Mark of Sullenness than of Patience; and they who in great Pain and Trouble contain themselves without speaking, augment their Grief, by inclosing it within their own Breasts, and shut out that Relief which might ease, though not cure them. We have the Examples of the best Men, and of our Saviour himself, for very violent Expressions of the Sufferings they felt and underwent, in their importunate Addresses to Heaven, and they have found Relief and Comfort in them: When our Pains are so great, and the Pangs thereof so often repeated, that we have Death in our View, and are even sensible of the last and sharpest Farewel between our Soul and Body, and in that Exigent cry out for Help, we can hardly be without some kind of Joy in the Prospect of the Grave, where all that Pain will be asleep, and vex us no more. When we are under heavy Afflictions by unjust Imprisonment, or more unjust Banishment from our Country, so that our nearest Friends are either kept from us (which is a very great Circumstance to improve our Calamity) or keep themselves from us, by withdrawing all their Affection and Kindness from us, (which is a much greater) and bemoan our selves aloud to God Almighty for such Ingratitude, we can hardly be without

out some Reflection upon the Vanity and Uncomfortableness of such Comforts; and from thence raise a more assured Confidence in that Friendship and Protection which we are sure never did, never can withdraw it self from any who depend upon it: In both Extremities, our most passionate Exclamations cannot but put us in mind of the Passion of our Saviour, whose Sufferings in both Kinds infinitely exceeded all we have or can suffer, his Pains so far above what any one can undergo, that all Mankind together would be broken and tortured with the least Part of the Pains he endured; and he was so far from receiving Comfort or Ease by the Administration of his Friends, that they all forsook him, and without any Violence and Prohibition withdrew themselves from him, and left him without one Acquaintance, in the Hands of his cruel Enemies; all which must allay the Sense of all we can undergo, and make us sorry, and even ashamed that we are put to endure no more.

O Lord God of our Salvation, who hast heaped so many Blessings upon us, and dost only chasten us, that we may with the more Confidence and Assurance fly unto thee for Succour: When thy Hand is most heavy upon us, in taking away our Health, and subjecting us to Diseases, and sharp Sickness, or by suffering others to take away our Fortune, and our Liberty, and subjecting us to our cruel and merciless Enemies; infuse into our Hearts the Remembrance and Consideration of the Sufferings of our Saviour, which he underwent for our Sakes; and let the Thought of that work upon us a Contempt, and even a Pleasure in all that we can undergo our selves. Amen.

P S A L M LXXXIX.

THERE is a great Distance between the Heart and the Lips, a great Difference between the Thoughts of the one, and the Words of the other; there is a great Difference between believing the Power, and Goodness, and Mercy of God in the Heart, and celebrating his Favours and Loving-kindness in our Discourse, and publishing them by the Words of our Mouth. It is a very hard Matter for the most obdurate and insensible Heart of God's Blessings, not in Truth to believe all those Attributes of Power and Justice, and Goodness, which are imputed to him; but for want of publishing them, for want of making them known with our Mouths, indeed for want of thinking of them, we do the same as if we did not believe them, and at last bring our selves not to believe them indeed. It is very true, the having the Name of God often in our Discourses, the frequent extolling his Power, and magnifying his Mercy and Goodness in the Words of our Mouth, is no infallible Argument of the Integrity and Piety of our Hearts; too many Men have made ill Use of that Dialect, and used religious Discourses as Stalking-Horses, to attain their own most corrupt Ends; and the greatest Mischiefs and Villanies have been brought to pass by the Delusion of such Pretences: Yet since the Thoughts of Mens Hearts can be only known to God himself, and that he hath reserved

served to himself the Search and Discovery of those Secrets; the only way left to judge of the Integrity of the Heart, is by the Integrity of the Words, and the Integrity of the Actions. He that never discourses of God Almighty, of the Influence he hath upon all our Actions, of the Pleasure he takes in beholding the Virtue and Sincerity, and Innocence of Mens Lives, and the Displeasure and Anger he is affected with against loose, and vicious, and profane Persons, will hardly avoid the Suspicion and Reproach of not thinking of, or believing in him as he ought to do. *David* himself, who had the greatest Integrity of Heart imaginable, when he was a Man after God's own Heart, thought it necessary to publish those Thoughts of his Heart, to make them known with his Mouth; as if he could not enough rely and depend upon those Promises God had made to him, if he himself did not make them known to others; and by a constant remembering and mentioning of them, even put God in mind of performing them.

The most upright and most innocent Men, cannot think of him as much, nor discourse of him as well as they ought to do, and yet there cannot be a more sovereign Advice, a more wholesome Prescription given to the most corrupt and dissolute Persons, than that they think and discourse of God as much and as well as they can: That they diligently examine, and seriously reflect upon the Promises he hath made to all those who live virtuously, according to the Precepts he hath given, and according to the Power he hath given too; which Promises every pious Man warrantably applies as made to himself; and upon the Threats and Judgments he hath denounced upon and against all vicious, and loose, and profane Men, which Judgments every such Man ought to look upon as pronounced upon him, cannot but recollect themselves, and the more cautiously weigh every idle Word they speak, and strictly survey every worse Action of their Lives, which must bring upon them so sad a Portion. When they shall well weigh, (and Discourse and Reflections will much advance that Consideration) that how severe soever his Justice is, and how terrible soever his Judgment; before he executes either, he sends his Mercy and his Truth before as Harbingers to prepare his way; he surprizes no Man for want of Notice or Information; he informs them of his Laws, and assists them with as much of his Grace for their Observation of those Laws, as they think they have Need of, or ask for; he invites them by Rewards, and threatens them by Punishments, and had much rather they would embrace the one, and avoid the other: But if all those Provisions and Preparations have no Effect, and that they still bravely defy him to do his worst, it is some Aggravation to their Offences, and no doubt will aggravate their own Sense of them, when it is too late, that they have shewed less Respect to God and his Ordinances, than they have paid to their King and his Laws; when in the highest Temptations of their Rage and Fury, they have forborn to commit Murther for fear of being hanged, and have never forborn a full Compliance with their Lusts and their Ambition for fear of being damned, when the one Penalty is less to be dispensed with than the other. No Man can complain of being in the dark, who may walk in the Light of his Countenance, who hath his Understanding so enlightened by him, that he knows the Way he should walk in, and can

only blame himself for wandering out of it; and if they will chuse rather to follow and be guided by the dazzling Light of their own vain Delights and Appetites, than the steady Light of his Countenance, and take more joy in raising their own Names in the Lustre of those Titles their Ambition hath acquired to them, than in his Name, and the Pleasure he hath prepared and reserved for them; it is no wonder if they reap as they have sown, and that their Harvest be answerable to their Seed; and instead of attaining to a fair and happy End of their Journey, they be tired in uneasy Passages, and lost and destroyed by dark Precipices.

We may piously say, that it is not in God's Power to break any Promise he hath made, or for his Word to fail in performing any good to Mankind, which we have any Warrant to expect from him; but we may lawfully believe that it is in our own Power to render all those Promises ineffectual to us, and to drive those Blessings from us, which he is willing to confer upon us: Let his gracious Purposes be never so much declared on our Behalf, it always supposes we will be as willing to receive, as he can be to give, and that we will demean ourselves so worthily, that neither his Justice, nor his Honour shall suffer in his Bounty towards us: But if we behave our selves so wickedly, that his Honour cannot subsist without our exemplary Punishment, and we yet contemn that Chastisement which he inflicts with Obstinacy and Perverseness, and raise the Account of our Iniquities higher than it was before he afflicted us; it is we that violate his Promises, and not he, and have sturdily resisted his good Inclinations, and not suffered him to be propitious to us; and then he will wipe us out of his Memory, and deface all those Records which might put him in mind of us, and of his gracious Resolutions towards us. And if God hath utterly cast off his own chosen People, and withdrawn all his Loving Kindness from them; if all the Promises he made to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and which he renewed and enlarged so solemnly to *David*, be totally cancelled for evermore, which we are not bound to believe, and may charitably hope the contrary; I hope we may more warrantably presume, that this Change in their Fate, and their being for ever left an out-cast Nation scattered over the Face of the Earth, hath proceeded from that Cause, that they drive God from them, before they were themselves driven from their Country, and because they have not yet a mind to return to him; rather than that that Promise was not literally made to them, but spiritually with reference to our Saviour, as some Learned Men have taken upon them to determine; and so *David* himself must have been mistaken, and applied that to his own Seed for ever, and for the Continuance of his Crown, which was intended and finished in the Coming of Christ.

O Lord, we do from the Bottom of our Hearts acknowledge and magnify thy Mercies, all thy repeated Deliverances throughout the whole Course of our Lives; we do confess that thou hast often redeemed us out of the Jaws of Death and Despair, and restored us again to a happy and plentiful Condition. Thy Power is still the same, O let thy Mercy be still the same too, and let not the Strength of our Sins be too strong for that thy Mercy, and drive it from us. Subdue our stubborn and perverse Spirit, that it may

no more contend with thee; but as thou hast wrought Miracles for us, and our Country, so finish thy Work, that we may never forfeit the Mercy thou hast manifested for us. Amen.

P S A L M XC.

THERE is no Consideration that we can easily bring our Mind to, that is more beneficial to us in the Course of our Lives, and contributes more to Prudence and Wisdom, by allaying all our unruly Affections and Appetites, which make our Lives troublesome and uneasy to us, than the Contemplation of the Brevity and Shortness of Life; nor is there any Animadversion which more disposes us to set a Value upon the next World, to make a true Estimate of the Felicity and Joy of it, than the same Reflection upon the inexpressible Shortness of the one, which is often determined in the Discourse of it, and the inconceivable Eternity of the other, which is not the nearer finished by being possessed a thousand Years. Our Ambition will never be limited, much less extinguished by our being told, that Offices and Preferment, and Honour, are vain Things, and not worth the Pursuit, because they carry many Temptations with them which makes us the worse Men, and exposes us to the Envy and Malice of those who may deprive us of them by their Power and Oppression; nor will our Covetousness be satisfied, much less reformed, by being told that Money is but Dross, and not worth the caring for, and that they live as happily who have but a little of it, as they who have a great deal. These Argumentations make very little Impression upon Men, except towards undervaluing those who make them; they see many Conveniencies in Honour and Preferment, which they are without who have them not; and their Experience tells them the great Benefit of Plenty, and that they who have it, may have whatsoever they desire, so that their Happiness is in their own Choice, which is a greater Prerogative than Princes commonly enjoy, because they have seldom Plenty: But then, when we seriously consider that how good Things soever these Honours and Preferments are, we cannot hold them, we cannot possess them, that they leave us, and run from us; that when we are possessed of them at our Bed-time, at our going to sleep, we may perhaps never awake, or so much as know we had them, except by such a Knowledge as we had rather be without. And if these Accidents, this sudden Determination of Life do not work much upon us, and though it may be our Case this very Day, yet possibly it may not be these twenty Years, and there is Pleasure and Satisfaction in the Delay; methinks the measuring the Length of Time that is possible in Nature to enjoy them, by the Years we have enjoyed them, which hath passed so soon that we have scarce discerned it, should, if not raise an Aversion towards those Pursuits, yet so far abate the Price of them, that we should be less keen, less importunate, less impatient for them. The Lastingness of any thing adds very much to the Esteem of it, and we have no Reason not to be equally transported with the Beauty of a Flower, which is infinitely above any that is made in Flesh and Blood, but that whilst we are beholding it with the Wonder it deserves, it fades in our Hand, and

loses all that we admire it for in the very Time we are raising our Admiration; and God knows, Life it self lasts very little longer, and fades almost as fast whilst it lasts.

They do affect too unnatural a Moroseness, who endeavour to raise in us a Contempt of Life, and such a Weariness and Undervaluing of it, as if it were almost a Fault to live, at least a Fault to desire it, which I doubt is hardly consistent with that Reverence and Duty which we owe to Divine Providence. Life is the Talent that God hath intrusted us to manage in this World for our own Benefit and his Glory, it is the Highway we are to travel through to go to him, and without which we can neither know nor enjoy the Pleasures of the other World; and Length of Days is a Blessing we may desire and take delight in, because he gives it as a Blessing; nor doth he give it as a Thing to be nauseated, or that we should be weary, or take Pains to be uneasy in: It will be enough, if we look upon it as a Talent to be well employed, and to be accounted for, and therefore to be able to make the Account fair and justifiable, that no Part of it, no Day or Hour of our precious Life be laid out in those Commodities he cares not for, less in those he detests, and will never allow upon our Account, and such as when we traffick in, we never intend to bring them into our Account, but find them intruded upon us by our treacherous Conscience, which we had bribed to blot them out. It will be enough, if we use it as a Journey we are to make for the most important Affairs; and we may refresh our selves, and take Pleasure in the Journey, so we think always of our Business, and go no Way that misleads us from the End of our Journey; and if we are not allowed the Time which we propose to our selves to make it in, we shall be brought a shorter Way to the End than we thought of, if we are found in the Way; and if we are out of the Way, it is a Mercy to keep us from farther straggling. We may warrantably love Life, so we do not love it too well, prefer it before him who gave it to us, and look upon it as the End, and not the Beginning of a Journey, and think that the deferring the Account, is the avoiding and cancelling it; and sure the very Observation we cannot chuse but make in our Journey, cannot but remove those weak and vain Imaginations from us.

If the shortness of Life, in which it is possible for us to enjoy the Pleasure and Delight of this World, doth not enough correct our Appetite to those Pleasures, because they may be enjoyed longer than we know, or than any body can determine: Yet the very short Duration of the Pleasures, though our Life should last very long, cannot but much abate the impatient longing for that, of which we shall have no Relish any considerable Time after we have gotten it: If we call to Mind, which a little Recollection will enable us to do, the several Stations of Life, those Baytings which have been most pleasant and satisfactory to us in the way, and how quickly we grew weary of enjoying them, when we had purchased them dear enough: So that we cannot complain that our Life is not long enough, but that the Pleasures themselves want Vigor to please us, when we want not Time to be pleased in. Methinks that should allay the present Appetite, that even that Appetite will not have the same Relish to-morrow that it had Yesterday. The Delights of our Childhood, which last longer than those of any other Season, and are like to have a sharper and more grateful Relish, because they are rarely controuled by any Suggestions of Reason,

or corrected by deliberate Reflections from Animadversions of Discretion or Piety, are yet so insipid when we are entring into the State of Youth and Manhood, that we are ashamed of having been pleased with that which hath now no Taste left: Nor do those Pleasures which come then in Season, and engross all our Thoughts, as the only Joy of Life, last so long, as those of which we were ashamed; and our Age exchanges them for new Pleasures, with bitter Reflections upon the old, which have lost all their Savour: So that no Men grow so soon weary of Life, as they who have enjoyed all the Pleasures for which they have desired to live, because they cease to be Pleasures; but that Weariness doth increase their Fear to die, and their Unwillingness to part with what they are so weary of possessing, which is the most miserable, and yet the most common Temper, that Men who are most weary to live, are most afraid to die. Let us therefore entertain and cherish Life with the Respect is due to it; so employ it, that it may have still somewhat to do, that the Laziness of it may not make us weary, nor the Viciousness of it make us unwilling to leave it; but let us look upon the Shortness of it, as an Argument not to prosecute that which we shall be long in obtaining, and having attained shall enjoy a very little while; and consider the Penalty for too much enjoying, is much sharper and longer than the Pleasure of enjoying it.

O Lord God, grant us Wisdom and Discretion to make the Consideration of the Brevity of this Life, a powerful Argument not to affect the Folly and Vanity of it; and give us Grace so much to consider the Eternity that succeeds it, that we may never hazard the Assurance of the one, for any Contingency in the other: Let us never be so sottish as to look upon the Pleasures of this World, which are in truth but of a Day at longest, as lasting and durable, and upon the Joys and Punishment of the other World, which shall have no End, to be but of one Day. O teach us to remember, and think, that from the Time we began to live, we have begun to die; and therefore that we may upon that Computation so spend our precious Time, that we be the wiser for it, and render thee such an Account of it as may please thee. Amen.

P S A L M XCI.

THERE is no Man so wicked, so debauched by the Practice of all License, Vice and Impiety, who doth not pretend to put his Trust in God, and to rely and depend upon him for all the Happiness or Good he expects in this World: I say pretend, for though in Truth he cannot rely upon what he never thinks upon, at least not thinks upon with Reverence, or so much as good Manners, yet he dares not be so impudent as to pretend to own and avow that he doth not put his Trust in him: And there is no Man so pious and virtuous, so given up to Prayer and Devotion, who putteth his Trust enough in him, enough relies and depends upon his Providence and Protection, who doth not frequently apprehend himself without that Trust and Confidence: And whether the one doth not trust him at all, whether he

he hath put God out of his Thoughts; or the other doth not trust him enough, whether he fails in part, or in all, no Man can make any infallible Judgment of either. It is true, both the Words and the Actions of the one and the other, the Course and Manner of their Lives, are shrewd Marks and Tokens to induce Men to believe upon whom and in what their Confidence is; yet they are but Tokens, which may be counterfeit as well as real; their true Thoughts, and their true Intentions in their Actions may be so disguised, and undiscernible in the one and in the other, through Levity and Vanity and Custom in the one, and by Design and Hypocrisy in the other, that a true Judgment cannot easily be made of either: And as most Men appear, or desire and endeavour to appear better and more exact Men than in Truth they are; so there are some Men who brutishly endeavour and foolishly take Pains to appear worse, more corrupt and wicked than they are: And as the former do less Hurt, because one who doth but act an honest Part, may infuse real Virtue into the Beholders; so the other are in some Respect more innocent than they, though not so good Examples, because they do not desire to deceive Men; and they who are deceived most, are very glad, and have full Satisfaction in being cozened.

Since then the Difference is so great between putting and not putting our Trust in God, and the Discovery so hard to be made by other Men; since the Disadvantage and Damage of the negative Party is so great and so miserable, that they have no Reason to expect or hope that any Thing they go about shall prosper; and if it doth prosper, it is a greater Judgment upon them, and conduces more to their Ruin, than want of Success could do; that they are without any Relish of any good they receive, and without any true Joy in attaining all they wish for; that their Days are full of Anxiety, and their Nights of Horror; that they live in a perpetual disquieting Fear of dying, and die in a desperate Hope that they shall never live again: And on the contrary, the Advantage and Benefit of the affirmative Party is so vast, that it is even unutterable, and hardly to be conceived; that it fits the Palate to the Meat, turns sharp and sowre into sweet and pleasant, makes every Thing that falls out agreeable to the Wish of him that receives it; he judges every Thing by the true intrinsick Value, and is not deceived by Appearances and Shadows; he shall not undergo nor feel any Pain from the Calumnies and Reproaches of those who oppress him, but they shall pass by, and not come near him; his Enemies shall not have the Pleasure that he so much as discerns them; he will not be terrified with the Malice or the Power of his Enemies, but will resist and despise them, by making a Conquest first upon himself; he will subdue his own Passions, and Affections, and Appetites, that they may not conspire with the other to infest and disquiet him, which unsubdued can do it much more; he will not lend him a Fear to keep him waking, nor a Hope to lull him into Sleep; he will extinguish his Anger and his Ambition, that it shall have no Strength left to struggle and contend with his Reason, or his Conscience, and will then look upon Adversity but as a fasting Day, a Day to mortify those Desires and Wishes which were grown too rank and dangerous for the Health of the best Part of his Constitution, his immortal Soul, and will prescribe it a Diet accordingly; and he will enjoy Prosperity with that Sobriety and Caution, which

he would use at a Feast, that the Variety or Excess of it, may not tempt him into Surfeit, or such a Repletion, as must be corrected by Sickness, or unwilling Abstinence; or as he would use somewhat that is lent him by a Friend, who may probably call for it again within an Hour: I say, since there is so huge a Disparity between those Two contrary Affections, and the Consequences which attend them, a Man cannot take too much Pains, be too strict in the Examination of himself, and the more strict, because it cannot be examined and discovered by any body else, that he may discover whether he doth indeed (since there are so many specious and false Appearances) put and repose his Trust in God Almighty; and this Inquisition cannot be made too particularly and intently, nor without Scrutiny, and ransacking into the most hidden Secrets and Corners of the Heart.

He that puts his Trust in God, hath God always in his Thoughts, embraces no Resolution, enters upon no Action, without well weighing whether it be agreeable to the Rules and Principles he hath prescribed; we must not trust our selves in contriving and concluding to begin, and then put our Trust in him for the End; and that he will carry us out of what we have begun without his Permission. Integrity and Obedience is the best Foundation of Confidence; and surely he who always thinks upon him, as there is no Action of our Life in which he ought not to be in our Thoughts, will easily bring himself to put his Trust in him; because he will plainly discern by his Observation of others, and his Experience of himself, that his Trust can be safely reposed no where else, and that he doth dispose of all Things, and that all Events answer his Directions, whether our Trust be reposed in him or no. If we think of him in the most trivial Actions of our Life, they will be less foolish and impertinent; if in our Hours of Mirth and Jollity, it will keep us innocent, and then our Mirth is grateful to him; if in our most serious and most perplexed Affairs, it will administer a Help and Light to conduct us; if in our full-blown Prosperity, it will infuse Sobriety into us, to behave our selves carefully; and in our lowest Adversity it will raise our Spirits, and make us equal to any Calamity that can befall us. To think of him perpetually, is the only Means never to be terrified with the thinking of him; he had rather be invited to us, to be let into our Hearts by a continual Consideration of him, that so he may live hospitably and familiarly with us; but if we have no mind to that, we cannot shut him out, he will at some time break in upon us, when we shall take no Pleasure in the Thought of him: They who think upon him but seldom, can never put their Trust in him.

He must be trusted alone; as he hath no Rivals in Power, so he will have no Rivals in Trust; our Confidence must not be divided between him and any body else: We must not put our Trust in great Men, nor in Princes themselves, and as little in our own Wisdom and Dexterity, if we would have him believe that we put our Trust in him: Not that we are not to use all lawful Means and Applications to dispose great Men who are able to do us good, or Princes to be propitious to us, or to decline our own Diligence and Industry to compass that which it is lawful for us to desire: Idleness and Laziness is no Sign of our Dependence, or putting our Trust in God; he never helps those who will not help themselves. But how much soever we apply our selves to, and trust

in others, it is our Trust in him that will dispose others to be willing, and qualify them to be able to help and gratify us; and how much soever we help our selves by our Industry, or by our Abilities and Merit, that we are thought to deserve what we pretend to; it must be our Trust in him that must make that Industry effectual, as it was by his Goodness that we received those Abilities, and his Bounty that rendered them acceptable to the Minds of Men: Whoever is the Instrument or Minister to convey it, he is the Author of all the Good we receive; and therefore as our Trust must be in him alone, so it must be constant to him always. Many are willing to trust him, and wholly to depend upon him in great Things, in Matters of the highest Importance, for the Salvation of their Souls, yea, and for the Establishment of their Fortunes; so that they may trust themselves in Affairs of less Moment, which are not worthy of his Care; they would be left sometimes to their own Election of Pleasures and Divertisements; that is, they would not be bound to think of him then; foolishly forgetting how many noble Enterprizes they have known miscarry by one Hours Sleep or Negligence, and as stupidly not considering that the not trusting in him, and not thinking upon him in those very Seasons, indisposes them to repose their Trust in him afterwards, and indisposes him to accept the Trust: The Truth is, they who have once piously and religiously put and reposed their Trust in him, find so much Ease, and Comfort, and Joy in it, that they cannot live a Moment without it, and no more not think of him, than they can breathe without Air: So that they who find an Inclination once to put him out of their Thoughts, may conclude that they never thought well of him, nor ever truly put their Trust in him.

The greatest Evidence we can give to our selves, and the greatest Manifestation we can make to the World, of putting our Trust in God, is by our Patience in any Calamity or Affliction that befalls us, by supporting it, and our selves in it, with a decent Chearfulness and Alacrity, which can flow from no Fountain, but of an entire Confidence and Acquiescence in God Almighty. It was a very great Flight the Philosopher made towards this Patience, and his Reason wonderful; *Posse lato animo adversa tolerare, quicquid acciderit sic ferre, quasi tibi volueris accidere, debuisses enim velle, si scisses omnia ex decreto Dei fieri, flere, queri, ingemere, descescere est*; to weep, to grieve, nay, so much as to sigh for Affliction, since it is sent to us by God, is to rebel and to revolt from him; it is to be wished that our Christianity would carry us to that Perfection, and it will be a great Shame to come far short of it. But how much we want of this Patience, by so much the less we put and repose our Trust in him; if it were entire, there could no Doubt remain in us of his Deliverance; and we deal more unkindly with him than with any Friend, from whom we are to receive a Benefit, if we will not wait his own Time for the conferring it, especially when we know that what we suffer in the Delay, will be abundantly repaired in the Measure of it. It is then in our own Power, in our own Election, to make those Seasons of Calamity, when the Malice and Power of our Enemies prevail over us, or under any other Affliction, more or less painful to us: If we repose a faint Trust in God, only because he is able, without any Confidence that he is willing to relieve us; it is no wonder if our Pangs and Throws continue very violent, and our Spirits be broken with the Anguish

Anguish of our Pain: But if we do divest our selves of all other Imaginations of Relief, and humbly and resignedly put our Trust in him, in a full Confidence that he will deliver us, as soon as it shall be good for us to be delivered, and that it is his Good-Will and Kindness to us, that he doth not do it sooner; we shall find such a Patience grow and arise in us, as will be able to controul and conquer the Grief we are affected with; such a Serenity of Mind as will disperse and scatter all the Fumes and Clouds of Melancholy which oppress us; we shall be able to tread upon all those Wild Beasts which would annoy and infest us, the Craft and the Cruelty of other Men, the Obstinacy and Animosity of our enraged Enemies, and especially, (and which is most worth the conquering) our own Pride, and Impetuosity, and Impatience.

ALmighty God, since we all pretend to put our Trust in thee, and to desire that eternal Happiness near thee, which thou hast provided only for those who do entirely put their Trust in thee, teach us to value that we profess so much to desire, and to endeavour the right Way to attain to it, by continually thinking of thee, and fearing to offend thee: Root out of our Hearts all those foolish and sordid Affections which dispose us to value and esteem the vain Pleasures and Pomp of this World, which are so opposite and contradictory to Eternity. Rouse us by those Mortifications which may raise our Spirits to think so much of Heaven, as not to desire to purchase all the Pleasures of the Earth at the Price of the least Transgression of thy Commandments; that so we may appear with that Confidence before thee, which only becomes those who have put their entire Confidence in thee. Amen.

P S A L M XCII.

ALL the Works of God are the proper Objects of Man's Contemplation throughout the whole Course of his Life, and we need little more to the making our Lives very fortunate and happy, (which we all desire) than a right Contemplation of them. We shall find Argument enough for the Day, and for the Night; for the Morning, the Sunshine of any Prosperity which may happen to us, and to humble us in that Season against any Temptation of Pride and Insolence; and for the Evening, the Darkness of any Affliction that may befall us, and to raise our Spirits against the Assaults of Melancholy, and Despair under any Calamity. But as it is very natural and warrantable in this immense Plenty of Objects, for a Man, (with a due Reverence to all) more to fix himself upon one Object, and to take delight in the Observation of some peculiar Act and Influence of Providence, and more to exercise his Devotion in that particular Contemplation, as he finds a more sensible Information and Benefit arise from thence to his own Faculties: So there are certain Objects and Arguments in Divine Providence, which are more proportioned for publick Devotions, operate more in the publick Agitation and Declaration of them, than in a private and retired Speculation; in which few Men can struggle with those Difficulties

ries which occur, with so much Courage as in the open Air, and with the Assistance and Communication of others. Men observe in the ordinary Course of their Lives, that they are more disposed, apprehend better, and comprehend more in some Seasons than in other; and in their common Conversation, that they understand one Man better in the same Argument from the very Figure of his Voice, and Clearness of his Pronunciation, than they do another who it may be understands the Argument much better; and Men may very reasonably believe, that there is not only a greater Benefit from publick and united Devotions, because they extend farther, but a greater Light and Instruction to every particular Member in that Conjunction, than in his more restrained and secret Contemplation: And it is the Opinion of most Learned Men, that *David* made this Psalm to be sung in publick upon the Sabbath-Day, when the People met all together in the Exercise of their publick and common Devotions; and therefore he chose a Subject which he knew troubled them all, and which they were least able single and apart to grapple with, the Success and Prosperity of the Wicked; and was therefore fittest for their united Strength, in the remembring the wonderful Things which God had done for them, and the Observation of the Downfal of their Enemies from their highest Pitch of all their Prosperity, notwithstanding which they were still troubled to see any more prosperous than themselves.

It is, hath been, and always will be a great Stumbling-Block in the Way of very good and pious Men, to see the Prosperity of the Wicked, Men of the worst Principles, and their Practice worse than their Principles; Men who never think of God, or pray to him, who oppose themselves to all his Commandments, and perversely chuse to do all that he hath forbidden, and renounce all that he hath enjoined to be done, who laugh at all Virtue, and make all Religion their Mirth, and yet attain to all they desire, grow high in their Titles, abounding in their Fortunes, and in that Excess of Power as to be able to oppress all who will not live with the same License; whilst innocent and virtuous Men, who will not therefore walk in their Paths, because God hath expressly prohibited them, and watch all their Steps that they may not offend him, and use all their Endeavours by a pious and devout Life to draw down his Blessings upon them, are notwithstanding exposed to many Difficulties in their Fortunes, to many Reproaches and Indignities in their Course of Life, want not only what would be convenient, but what is necessary; and which afflicts them most, and which they are least able to bear, are subject to the Scorn and Derision, and Oppression of those high Transgressors. This Prospect, I say, in spite of all Animadversions and Reflexions, and Experience, so far transports even good Men, so far corrupts their Understandings, that because they cannot discern any Ground or Reason why those ill Men should have so much good Fortune, why God should permit them to receive such plentiful Wages for their Iniquity, they will not reflect upon themselves, and consider that all they suffer doth not exceed the Measure of Punishment they deserve for being much worse than they ought to be, though it may be they are much better than the others; and so though the one Party hath more Happiness than it deserves, the other deserves at least as much Misery as it endures. And possibly if they did without Partiality or Passion look upon themselves, and the others, they would find

some natural Reason why the others exceed them in the Advantages and Benefits of this World, they may find in them some Virtues and Qualifications, which they in all their imagined Perfection may be without, and which reasonably are attended with notable Success, and in a degree merit it. Ill Men, who resolve to satisfy their Ambition, and to gratify their Appetite, have commonly an Industry, and a Constancy to contend with any Thing in the way, are firm and resolute to their Purposes, which if the End were good would deserve the Reward, and being never so bad is rewarded with it; whilst honest and upright Men are lazy and irresolute in their Prosecutions, and expect all Advantages should flow in upon them, as Tribute due to the Integrity of their Conscience; and sure no Man can wonder that the more active Men get the Precedence in the Preferments of the World, which belong to the Laborious and Importunate.

But it hath pleased God to administer other Cordials to the drooping Spirits of those who out of a pious Jealousy and Consternation for his Divine Justice, are too much troubled for the Success and Happiness of wicked Men, and doth not adjourn them to the last Day, (where what their Portion will be, is manifest enough) for the Evidence how false, and deceitful, and treacherous to themselves, all their imaginary Greatness and Prosperity is, upon the very Stage where they have acted all their gaudy Parts, where their Pride hath triumphed, and the Sacrifices they have offered to all their Passions, have appeared with more Lustre. In this Theatre of the World, and before the same Auditors and Spectators, they shall be stripped of all those Ornaments which drew the Eyes and Adoration of Men upon them, and undergo all that Contempt which they endeavoured to make others subject to; they shall look as if all their Verdure had been conferred upon them for no other Reason, but that they might wither the more eminently: They shall see those whom they had triumphed over, whose Hopes they had blasted, and whose Youth and Vigor they had oppressed and subdued, revive in their Age with fresh Strength, and be notorious and eminent in all the Advantages which Providence hath promised to those who prefer the Oppression before a Partnership with the Oppressor: And because Evidence and Examples keep up the Spirits and Courage of Men better for these Contests, and to resist and controul those Contemplations, than Precepts and Promises can do, which hardly suppress the Envy of present Successes, there is no Age passes in which there are not Examples enough in every Nation of God's signal Justice of this Kind, and by which the woful Misery and Destruction of impious Men, who had made the most ample Provision for their own Security, and the Resurrection of the most oppressed and remediless Persons from the Bottom of Despair to Plenty and to Glory, have been so manifested to the World, that no Man can be so weak as not to have made the Observation, and therefore he will be more to blame, if upon any just Occasion he doth not make the Experiment.

O Lord God, who givest that Encouragement to those who endeavour all they can to obey thy Commandments, and to walk in those Ways which thou hast directed them to walk in, that besides the Quiet in their own Minds, which they find from doing their Duty, they behold with their Eyes thy signal Judgments upon those who have

for some time appeared most prosperous in their Transgressions, and in Contempt of thy Word; and likewise see thy Redemption of those to great Happiness and Prosperity, who seemed to be so low in the Reputation and Esteem of Men, that they were hopeless of any Remedy: Make, we beseech thee, those Examples of thy Providence so to operate upon our Hearts and Affections, that we may never be tempted by the Success of others, or terrified by any Affliction of our own, to swerve from doing all that thou hast enjoined us to do. Amen.

P S A L M XCIII.

WE may with Reverence to the Divinity of our Saviour, and to all the stupendious Miracles wrought by him in his whole Life, and in his Resurrection it self, piously say, that the Miracle he did work after his Resurrection in the Propagation of Christianity, is not inferior to all the rest. Nay, that it hath given more Credit and Reputation to them than the Miracles themselves did to him when he performed them; which could then only work upon the Spectators, and must naturally lose Vigor in every Relation to every one who was not present; whereas by the wonderful Propagation of his History, and his Doctrine, the World is become Spectators, and Men are reasonably convinced as much to believe all he said, and all he did, as they did who were upon the Place with him. It would not have been very wonderful, that the People who expected him, and who had so many Predictions and Promises of his Coming, and so many Marks and Tokens to know him by, and who believed that he came only for their Sakes, and for their Benefit, should unanimously have bid him welcome when he was come, and believed all he said, and done whatsoever he had commanded; and that such a Union of a whole Nation should have gotten Credit, and made many Profelytes amongst their Neighbours, would not have been very strange: But when upon the Matter, that whole Nation to which he was peculiarly sent, would not believe one Word he said, rejected him, and put him to Death as an Impostor; that they who would not believe him when he was alive, should trust in him when he was dead; that a Handful of weak and illiterate Men, though they reported nothing of him, but what they had seen with their Eyes, and heard with their Ears, should find Credit enough to be believed, and Authority enough to plant this Doctrine in all Nations who neither expected a Saviour, nor had ever heard what he was, or what he was to do, and that in less than a Year they should reduce many Millions of Men to this Faith, is indeed very wonderful: Yet that might naturally enough have been done too: For though they who first knew these Preachers and Publishers of this new Doctrine to have been poor and illiterate Men, and so might out of Contempt of their Persons and their Educations, more reasonably have contemned their Discourse; they now appeared to be Men of great Parts, sharp Wit, and sound Judgment; they conferred with all Nations in their own Languages, disputed with them upon their own Principles, and converted them from their Principles by their own Logick: They were eloquent above those who had studied it all their Time, and had that

that Elocution and Power of Words, that *Felix* trembled when he heard *Paul's* Discourse when he was a Prisoner; and *Agrippa* was half converted when he heard him speak but an Hour, and durst not trust himself so far, as to hear him again for an inconvenient Conversion. That Men thus qualified should work upon the Affections and Understandings of Men, and bring many others to think as they do, is no more than is seen every Day: Novelty is very welcome into all Company, and Men who speak very plausibly and confidently will have Followers enough; and if these first Preachers had made that use of their Success, as to make themselves Generals of the Congregations which they converted, and led them on to help them in converting others (as no doubt they would willingly have followed them, to any End they had prescribed to them) they might as easily have converted, as overrun the World; and the apparent Strength of the Christians would have been Argument enough for the propagating Christianity.

But Christianity neither did or could prosper by such Expedients, it was so far from advancing it self by any popular or plausible Insinuations, that it divested Nature of its original Right to repel Injuries and Violence, and prepared its Subjects to bear and to expect all the Reproaches, and Indignities, and Oppression, and Death, and Torments, which they saw was every Day the Portion of those who professed it: And lest their Number and Power to resist (for they were much more united than it was possible for their Enemies to be) should tempt and reduce them to repel Force with Force, and to establish their Security by their Courage, they were admitted to be Christians upon that Condition, that they would quietly and patiently submit to whatsoever was inflicted upon them, by those who had Authority over them, how tyrannical soever they exercised that Authority; it admitted no Faction or Artifice to advance it, nor Multitudes to cry it up; they who received it remained still in the Places where they received it, to contend with those who opposed it, by the Purity and Integrity of their Lives, and by the Chearfulness of their Deaths, if they were put to undergo it, which was their Lot every Day: Single Men entred into Cities, contradicted the most learned Defenders of their native false Religion, won their Auditors and Disciples from them, converted whole Nations and Kingdoms from the Ignorance and Customs their Fathers had been brought up in, and persuaded them to embrace a Faith that did not only render them incapable of Authority, and Command, or Preference in the Countries where they lived, but made them liable to all those Penalties and Forfeitures which the Laws and Customs of the Country had provided against them; for which they had no Recompence, but the Pleasure and Satisfaction they found within themselves, and which the Standers-by could not know they had. It was not only undervalued and opposed by the Noise and Clamour of the Vulgar and Common People, those Waters which lift up their Heads against any Reformation, and overflow their Banks, and destroy those who would restrain them; but the Sea it self rose up against it, and with its mighty Waves endeavoured to devour it: Kings and Princes, and the mighty Emperors, enacted all manner of Edicts against it, and all manner of Punishments for those who professed it; which were executed with the utmost Rigor, and to the taking away of the Lives of many Millions of Men, who could have redeemed themselves from that horrible Violence,

lence, if they would have endeavoured it; and this Blood was most plentifully drawn in the Time, and by the Direction of some of the most virtuous Princes and Emperors who then governed the World, and who left greatest Monuments of their Justice and good Nature; which was a Circumstance that would have made Men suspect their own Innocence, if it had not been founded upon that which was infallible in it self, and that which could not deceive them.

This was the Advance and Progress which Christianity made in the World by this humble Beginning, it crept into the Hearts of Men; and in this quiet and peaceable Posture, and without any Weapons, but the Reasonableness of its Doctrine, and the Sincerity of Life, it hath subdued Empires; and reduced them to profess an Obedience to what they so long contemned and persecuted; it hath abated the Edge of the Axe, by undergoing the Strokes of it, and softened the Hearts of their cruel Persecutors, by submitting to all their Severities and Rigors. And if no other Opinion or Doctrine in the World, that hath once entered into the Heart of Man, hath ever made such a Progress in the World, and prevailed so near that Height over so many Nations of different and contrary Natures and Humours, by such Circumstances, and without any Force or Violence to direct Men in the Knowledge of it, and to controul their Aversion from it; methinks that Consideration alone should make a deep Impression in the Hearts of Men, to persuade them to think that God hath not done all this without expecting great Effects, and a great Harvest, from a Doctrine thus nursed, and cherished, and preserved, and conducted by his Wisdom and Almighty Power; nor is that Circumstance of the Miracle less stupendious than all the rest, that the only Record to prove this Doctrine (the Scripture) should be preserved in unquestionable Integrity; that it should make so many Voyages through, and inhabit so long in the Enemies Quarters, and receive no Marks of their Malice by defacing the Beauty of it; that in ten universal Persecutions of it wherever it was known, with Fire and Sword, they should not have seized upon, suppressed and destroyed such an uncontrollable Evidence and Record: Nay, we do not find that ever one Copy of it was seized upon, and used with any Indignity, or Endeavour to traduce or corrupt it: So that it remains after so many Hundred Years, in the Hands of all Nations, in unquestionable Purity, and uncorrupted by the Translation into all Languages; and so is not only the oldest and most authentick Book that is in the World, but hath been kept and preserved even in those Places where it hath been most persecuted, and where remain none, or very few Records of that Religion, on Behalf whereof the Christian was hated and persecuted.

If now, after more than Sixteen Hundred Years, Christianity hath less Vigor than it had in its Infancy, and decays more under the Protection, than it did under the Persecution of Kings and Emperors; if licentious and dissolute Men shall be able by their Wit and Scoffs to discountenance it more, and by their private scurrilous Conversation, more to bring down the Reputation and Authority of it, than *Julian* could do in the Seat of the Empire; if the Scripture which hath been preserved amongst Pagans and Infidels, shall lose its Reverence amongst Christians who pretend no other Evidence for their Salvation, all we can say of it is, that the Doctrine is still the same, only the Professors
of

of it are worse; and we have the more reason to be ashamed, that it should flourish less now in Cities, and in Palaces, than it hath done in Woods and Caves; and that after it hath been miraculously rescued from the Power and Persecution of merciless Tyrants and Infidels, it should be extinguished under Christian Princes, and under Laws and Constitutions devised for its Countenance and Support, by the Profaneness, Impiety and Blasphemy of those who make Profession of it, and who could do it no Harm or Dishonour by any other way than professing it. But that Tribe of Christian Pagans must know, that he who hath through so many Ages cherished and preserved it, is still cloathed with the same Majesty he had then; and they ought very reasonably to believe, that he will not suffer the Noise of such shallow Waters, or the Waves of such narrow Seas, the corrupt Lives and Manners of wicked Men, to prevail so far, as to extinguish that Light in one single Nation; or if they should be able to extend their Venom so far, as to make a whole Kingdom revolt into the same Infidelity with them, God will find a Remedy proportionable to their Disease; remove that Light from them, which they have so industriously endeavoured to put out, and cover them with that Darkness they have so much affected, leave them to find the way out of their Perplexities, by their own Wit and Cunning: And in the End, if these Chastisements do not reclaim, he will cure them and their Country of their Infidelity, by making and giving them as a Prey to Infidels, who in Acknowledgment of his Bounty and his Mercy, shall become better Christians, and so their Destruction shall advance and propagate Christianity, which their Preservation and Prosperity refused to do.

GRACIOUS Lord God, who with such wonderful Care and Omnipotence, hast planted the Knowledge of thy self in so many Nations, Kingdoms and Empires, where thy Name was not heard of, and hast miraculously converted such a World of Infidels to a Faith in thy Son, and to the renouncing all their fond Idolatry and Trust in other Gods; and dost expect that we by our Lives and Manners should, with the help of thy Spirit, work upon others to submit to the same Gospel; O do not withdraw thy Assistance from us, as if we were strong enough to assist others: Thou knowest our Weakness, and our Wilfulness, and our Wickedness, and that we are more like to drive Men from any Inclination to serve thee, that they may in nothing be like us, than to invite them by any good they can see in us, to be of the same Faith with us. Once more, we beseech thee, renew thy holy Spirit in us, that we may not by the Sinfulness of our Lives, discredit the Religion we profess, and make the Death of thy Son of no other Effect, than for our Condemnation.

P S A L M XCIV.

FEW Men are so wicked as to take Delight in Wickedness for Wickedness Sake, but to compass some End in which they could take Delight; and if that could be otherwise attained to, they would not affect to be wicked. They who intend to commit a Robbery, had rather find the Money in the Way, than the Person whom they intended to rob; and he who is fullest of Revenge, had rather the same Calamity would otherwise befall that Person, which he would bring upon him, than himself to be the Author of it; especially if his Revenge provoked him to take away his Life. If this be true, as for the most Part it is, it proceeds only from want of Consideration, and well weighing how to accomplish their own Desires, that Men so miserably indulge to that brutish Passion of Revenge, upon any Injury they have received, or imagine they have received from another. When Revenge is not only a Weapon that he knows not how to use, but belongs to another, out of whose Hand he must wrest it, before he can apply it to any Use; even out of the Hand of God himself, to whom Vengeance alone belongeth, and who manages it so punctually, and so irresistibly, that the Wrong-Doer and the Oppressor are as sure to undergo it, as they enjoy the Fruit of their Oppression: And therefore Men are weak, as well as wicked, to trouble themselves (for Revenge is an unruly and a troublesome Passion) to do that which they cannot do innocently, and which will be done for them by another, and to their full Reparation. It is so easy a Thing to do Wrong, to speak bitterly of others, to traduce them in their Reputation, that the poorest Man hath Power to do it; and a little Malice, with as little Authority, can do much greater Injuries: And if every Man thus injured, shall resort to his own Passion, and carve out his own Revenge, the World will be full of Blood and Confusion, and God, instead of vindicating any, must take Vengeance upon all.

The Truth is, they who meditate Revenge most, are Men who receive least Injuries, and therefore they have less Reason to refer the Vindication of them to God Almighty, and to wait his Leisure; they are solicitous to compound Injuries out of Omissions and Neglects, and believe themselves injured if they are not respected, and are angry with those who get any Thing which they have a mind to have, and will be revenged upon them for being so partial, as to prefer themselves before other Pretenders; and indeed this Vengeance doth not belong to God. No Man so revengeful as the envious Person, who sighs and grieves at the Prosperity of others, as if he were robbed of all that others enjoy, and so meditates Revenge in calumniating those who are preferred before him, and torments himself how to be revenged on them. No Passion raises so much Agony and Perplexity in the Breast that entertains it as Revenge doth; let it be never so reasonably, and upon the greatest Provocations and Indignities indulged to, the meditating and the digesting the Resolution, the Conference with angry Persons for the conducting it, the contriving the Way and Means to execute it, and all the other uneasy Preliminaries which in those Contrivances are necessary,

fary, take full Vengeance upon the Person himself, before it reaches his Adversary, and makes him pay dear Interest for any Pleasure he can take in the Mischief he shall bring to pass: To which Account, when he hath added the Melancholy he undergoes after his Inventions have succeeded, and he hath complied with the Dictates of his Fury, what he is to suffer by the Laws which he neglected and provoked, and the difference he finds in his own Bosom, between the bearing and doing of Wrong, he will find that Revenge is the most unprofitable Sin, and instead of allaying and asswaging the Pain, increases and aggravates the Sense and the Smart of it: It takes away and loses the Compassion of other Men, who naturally pity those who are oppressed; it forfeits all the Joy and Comfort he had from his own Innocence, and divests him from any Confidence he can reasonably repose in God Almighty, who would fully have repaired him, if he had had the Patience to have waited for it: But now after he hath made himself his own Judge, whatever Severity may be exercised towards his Adversary, he is not in the Case, nor shall receive any Benefit or Advantage by it.

On the contrary, the pious Man, who puts all his Hope in God, and knows him to be the Judge of the whole Earth, and the Avenger of all the proud Tyranny that is exercised there, looks upon ordinary and light Afflictions, Backbitings, and common Trespasses, as Diseases to which Men are by Nature liable, and the best Constitutions cannot avoid; and if they grow to more extraordinary Mortifications, or Combinations and Conspiracies of many powerful Men against his Fortune and his Life, that he knows not where to repose himself in Safety; he strait discovers, even in the Extraordinariness of the Prosecution, that it must have a higher Rise than the common Malice in the Heart of Men, and discerns God's Hand in his Enemies chusing those Courses which are contrary to the Ends they propose, and from thence raises his Spirits, and composes his Mind to an Acquiescence in his good Pleasure, and a Patience to wait his Time for Deliverance: To what Streights soever his Condition may be reduced, he finds some Relief still administered to it, which he thought not of, nor could provide for himself; Civility and Kindness from Strangers, Sorrow and Conversion of his Enemies, and the Infatuation of the rest to follow those Counsels which lead to their own Destruction; he finds all other Struggling of his own, but the Preservation of his Integrity, and the more firm Deference, and fixing his Confidence in God, is Folly, and the only Way to reverse the Protection he is otherwise sure of: He doth no more think of Revenge, than desire to continue miserable; he knows that he who hath commanded Justice to be done to all Men, will punish all who do it not; and the more they are out of the Reach of ordinary Redress, the more he manifests his own high Jurisdiction in some exemplary Judgment; he hath a Method of his own, which the blind Fury and Violence of Man cannot contrive, to bring upon corrupt Men their own Iniquity, and to cut them off in their own Wickedness; they shall grow weary and jealous of each other, and conspire each other's Ruin, and bring the same Destruction upon themselves, or undergo Destruction by the Contrivance of others, in the same Manner as they endeavoured to bring it upon the Innocent; who at the same time sees his Integrity vindicated to the World, in the infamous Confusion of his proud Oppressors; who at the same time for their most sensible Punishment, retain Malice
enough

enough to be more afflicted by that Vindication, than with their own Shame and Condemnation.

O Lord God, who wilt not permit us to entertain one revengeful Thought in our Hearts against those who with the greatest Malice and Outrage exercise the most heavy Oppression upon us, yet art well content that we appeal to thee for Justice, and art not offended with our Passion and Importunity in asking it; Look down we beseech thee with Mercy and Compassion upon those who lie under great Affliction, and suffer in their Fortunes, or their Reputation and good Name, by the Malice and unjust Prosecution of great and powerful Adversaries; give them Patience to undergo their undeserved Oppression in Submission to thee, and make haste to deliver them by some manifest Discovery of their Sincerity and Uprightness, and some exemplary Judgment upon their Enemies, to thy Glory, and for the Encouragement of those who chuse rather to submit to any Obloquy or Disgrace, than to redeem themselves by any Breach of thy Commandments. Amen.

P S A L M XCV.

THERE are as many Ways and Kinds of Devotions as there are Passions, and Affections, and Fancies in the Hearts and Minds of Men; and they are all acceptable to God Almighty, because there is no Kind of Devotion that is not founded upon the Power and Goodness of God, and in the recollecting and fixing the Thoughts upon him, in how different Ways soever the same is expressed. The Wisdom and Piety of the Church hath appointed this Psalm to be used every Day in the Beginning of our publick Morning Devotions, that there may be Conjunction and Union of all in Heart and Voice, in the Acknowledgment of his Mercy: Whatever you do in your Closets severally and privately, *Venite*, come hither and do it together; and whatever Difference there is between you in Affections and Opinions concerning other Things, you all equally esteem and magnify the Greatness and Providence of God; therefore, *Venite*, Come and do it together; and if we did so heartily and unanimously, it would hardly be in our Power to keep our Affections at so unbrotherly a Distance, or our very Opinions from being charitable towards each other. It is from not acknowledging at all, or not acknowledging together the Superiority of God over all the World, and his Power and Justice in disposing of all Things in it, that we fail in our Humility towards him, and in the Exercise of Christian Duties towards all Men; and it is from not enough remembering the Ingratitude and Rebellion of our Forefathers, and the grievous Punishments they underwent for the same; their forcing God to reverse his own Purpose, and compelling him not to let them see the Blessing he intended to them, that we are still so much inclined to murmuring at his Providence, and to undervalue his Power. The not obeying this Summons, this *Venite*; the not fixing our Thoughts upon him, the not acknowledging him and all his Attributes together, and in one another's hearing,

hearing, doth so much harden our Hearts, that we care less for provoking his Anger, than for offending our next Neighbour, who is not inferior to us in his Quality and in his Power. We do indeed go very often, we cannot well chuse, to hear this Psalm pronounced, and do pronounce it our selves as loud as any; but this is not the *Venite*; there is no coming in all this going; we do make a Noise, but there is no Joy, no Thanksgiving in the Noise, no Affections of the Heart, no Reflections upon the Presence of God: We have the Words very perfectly in our Mouths, our Tongues utter them without Hesitation, and as much without Reverence, or exercising our Thoughts upon them, or so much as imagining that we are in the Presence of God. If it were otherwise, we should after so often going, come the better home; we should hear his Voice more, hearken to what he hath said to us by his Messengers, and what he hath vouchsafed to say to our Consciences by his own Voice, by his frequent Insinuations into our Breast, how obstinately soever we have endeavoured to keep him out, and denied him Entrance.

It was a wonderful Comprehension, and may seem not to be without some Inspiration, that the Philosopher could think and determine of God in the Singular Number, and of his particular Care of Mankind, *Prope est à te Deus, tecum est, intus est*; that he should discover, without presuming to know who, or what he is, that God is not only near every Man, and with him, but in him, that *In unoquoque virorum bonorum habitat Deus*; he did not think that God would have any thing to do with vicious and wicked Men, who were not acquainted with the Practice of any Virtue; but that he kept his Residence, and constantly dwelt with and in every good and worthy Person: That he should discern such an Operation and Influence of God's Spirit upon the Mind and Actions of Man, *Sacer intra nos spiritus sedet, malorum bonorumque nostrorum observator & custos, hic prout à nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat*: That he should find that God's Holy Spirit treated us, and wrought in us according to the Treatment it receives from us, and the Reception and Entertainment we give to it: I say, That a Heathen Philosopher should know and preach this Doctrine so many hundred Years since, and we know so little of it yet, that we take Pains to persuade our selves that he is not within Sight or Hearing of us, and that he takes no Notice of any thing we do: And we are so far from being sensible of any such Operation of God's Spirit within us, that we impute every Suggestion or Disposition to Virtue and Honesty, to the Vivacity of our Will, and Strength of our Reason; and every secret Disinclination and Aversion from Vice, to the Melancholy of our Nature, which we endeavour to correct and drive away, that it may not be so impertinent. The Philosopher, who understood human Nature at least as well as we, and knew the utmost Extent of natural Affections very well, found somewhat in himself which could not be the Effect of that meer Light, and so concluded that there was a Divinity in it which he could not define; and we who pretend to have his Philosophy (and it is our own Fault if we have not) strengthened and inform'd, by knowing the God of Nature, and enlightened by our understanding the Gospel, and the Obligations we have to that God of Nature, take indeed less Delight in this clear Knowledge of him, make less spiritual Reflections upon his Purity by it, than he did in his industrious

and awful Search into him, and the dark Notions he had of his Dignity and Majesty: And if we look to be tryed by that Rule, That to him that hath, more shall be given; and from him that hath not, shall be taken that which he hath; we have no Reason to presume that we shall enjoy a better Condition than he doth, who endeavoured and struggled with his utmost Faculties to ascend up into Heaven, whilst we supinely and wretchedly lie and entangle our selves upon the Earth, that we may be sure not to mount thither, and admire and adore all those false sensual Delights which he contemned and despised out of his Admiration of Heaven: We are not only worse Philosophers, have less Use of our Reason, but worse Christians, think less upon, and worse of the Supreme Providence, than he did, and, like wealthy Merchants, give over our Industry, to live upon and enjoy what we have got. We know too much to learn more, and instead of considering our selves as the People of his Pasture, and the Sheep of his Hand; of being willing to be led and guided by him, and to contain our selves within the Bounds and Limits he hath prescribed us; we have broken out of his Fold, and are too stubborn for his Hand; we have got sweeter and pleasanter Pasture to feed in, without Rebukes and Controuls, which his Flock must be subject to; and have in truth less Reverence and Fear of his Anger, than the noble and brave Heathen professed to have, and gave Evidence of.

GOOD God, thou hast called us often to come unto thee, and hast shewed us the Way plain enough to find thee: Thou hast called us by Favours, and Blessings, and great Prosperity, which is a Voice we love to hear; yet the Effect hath been, that we have rather thought the better of our selves than of thee, and thought more of our own Merit than of thy Bounty: Thou hast likewise called us by the shrill and unwelcome Voice of Mortifications, Chastisements, and Afflictions; but that terrible Voice hath not humbled us enough to draw nearer to thee; we are still stubborn and refractory, and more inclined to magnify and extol our selves, than to celebrate thy Power and Goodness. At last, make we beseech thee thy Call effectual, that by acknowledging our own Unworthiness, and thy infinite Mercy, we may make our selves worthy of thy Mercy and gracious Acceptation. Amen.

P S A L M XCVI.

THE whole Business of our Life is a continual praising and magnifying the Power and Goodness of God Almighty, and being all we have to do, it should seem to be a Lesson very easy to be learned, and that being still the same Subject, and to the same Person, the same Form should still serve the Turn: But as God doth not intend that this continual Exercise shall be a Burthen and Vexation to human Nature, so there is such Variety in the Favours he confers upon us, many are so new, and so unexpected by us, that it admits and requires new Ways and Expressions of our Acknowledgment, and leaves us to all the Variety of expressing it, that innocent and pious Fancies shall suggest to us:

us: I say, there are so many Ways of praising and magnifying him, that we need never be tired with it, nor shut out one chearful innocent Act of our Life, to get Time for it; indeed all the innocent Part of our Life is the most chearful Praise, and magnifying him, which he requires of us. The whole Life of a Christian is a continual Warfare; that's true, and never the worse for that; for as some War is lawful, and we may be sure the War we are commanded to wage is very lawful; so where there are Soldiers enough to contend and master the Enemy, and Money and all other Necessaries to maintain and support those Soldiers, the War may not only be carried on with Success, but with Pleasure and Delight to: Men find too much Pleasure in War that have none of those Provisions and Advantages, and delight in the Miseries it brings upon others, without any proportionable Benefit to themselves; we may very well therefore be satisfied with the State of War we are incumbent upon: We are very well supplied to bear the Charge of it, and have Authority ample enough to govern the Forces which are under us; and nothing but our own Remisness, and want of Discipline, can give the Enemy Advantage upon us: If we are overcome, we are betrayed, and the Treachery hath proceeded from our own Negligence, and want of Care to prevent it; he hath not broken in upon us by the weakness of the Port, but we have trusted him with the Key, and he opens it when we are asleep, and brings in all the treacherous Crew upon us, and binds us when we would resist; and then we cannot pay too dear, nor complain of that Slavery which we have tamely and cowardly given our selves up to: The War we are engaged in is but against our own Inmates, our own Passions and Affections, which we may subdue if we will, and if they do not subdue us, we have the Victory; and God, who gave Man the Jurisdiction over all the Beasts of the Forest, hath not left him without Power to subdue those which feed in his own Pasture. There is no Passion so unruly, but God hath put a Weapon into our Hand that will tame it, if we will use it, and apply it in our Defence: And to manifest that it is so, and for our Shame and Confusion if we are subdued by it, there is no Vice that triumphs over us, and takes us Captive, but the same Vice hath been subdued and captivated by many brave Heathen Men, in Vindication of the Dignity of Nature, without any Prospect towards Divinity. The Lust that inflames and enslaves us, and the Pride that swells and puffs us up, and the Ambition that transports and distracts us, and the Covetousness which insnares and torments us, and makes us torment so many others, have been all extinguished, or all allayed or corrected by them, by the Predominancy of their Wit, and their Reason, not superior to what ours is, or ought to be, and without the Care or Desire to please any other than themselves. If we can upon much higher Motives, and upon much nobler Encouragements, than were proposed to them attain the same Conquest, we have performed our Warfare like good Soldiers, and have taken the best way to praise and magnify God, and in the Manner he most desires to be magnified.

Most of the learned Men are of Opinion, that this Psalm is part of the devout Rapture that *David* sung upon the Return of the Ark: The Ark, that after it was made Captive, rescued it self out of the Enemies Hand, with a greater Slaughter than they had sustained who suffered

ferred it to be taken, and made it self more terrible when alone, than it was in the midst of the Army that should have defended it: And they who thought not of God, when they were overthrown, or when they were Conquerors in the Field, after they had now vanquished their Enemies to the Degree they could wish, and imagined that they had taken their God himself Prisoner, and brought him into their own Sanctuary, where a greater God than he inhabited, quickly now discerned the Weakness of their own Deity, and the Greatness and Majesty of that Power which they had blasphemed, by the several prodigious Punishments they underwent; and so made Haste to send that Divinity out of the Country which they could not comprehend, and found Beasts more rational than themselves to bring it to pass. This new way of blessing his People, when he was most angry with them, required a new way of acknowledging it; and the King himself thought he could not devoutly be too merry in such a Solemnity, though it exposed him to the Contempt of his haughty Wife. A usual way of Thanksgiving, a Thanksgiving that had been ever used before, would not have been proportionable to a Benefit so new, of such a Nature as had never been conferred before. If Men who are surprized with new Blessings beyond their Expectation, and above their Comprehension, Blessings they had no Reason to imagine could fall upon them, would reflect seriously upon that Power which could only bring it to pass, and not be less amazed at it themselves, than all the World is that beholds it; they would likewise manifest their Joy some new and extraordinary way; they would exercise their Fancies, and raise their Inventions with as much Fervor, as they do upon less serious Occasions; and in the manner of celebrating their Acknowledgments, would at the same Time raise a Monument of God's Blessing, and of their own Gratitude: They would acknowledge publicly and frequently upon all Occasions, how fruitless and ridiculous all their own Policy and Designs have been; how all great Men, and States and Princes, (those Gods to whom they sacrificed their Time and Application, and upon whose Assistance they only depended) rejected all their Addresses, or (which is the worst kind of Rejection) deluded them; and when all the Attempts which their own Wits had suggested to them, or entertained, were baffled and frustrated, and their very Hopes expiring; that then, in that Minute, which had scarce any to succeed it, a Divine Light brought in upon them, revived them, half dead, led and conducted them by the Hand through the Snares and over the Precipices which lay in their Way, to a Place of Repose and Security, to a Place of Honour and Glory: They would sadly reflect upon the Horror of that Darkness and Despair they were in, and the Circumstances thereof; and upon the dawning of that Light, the Vows and Promises they made, if it would farther vouchsafe to shine upon them; and it is very probable, that from this Reflection they would make an Acknowledgment so acceptable, that God would pour down new Mercies upon them, to the Confusion of their Enemies, and the composing and uniting all Affections to a Concurrence in what they most desire.

O Lord,

O Lord, thou hast declared thy Glory amongst us, and wrought Wonders on our Behalf, in the View of the whole World: As thou didst heretofore punish the Murmur and Rebellion of thy own chosen People by their Loss of thy Ark, because they had not Reverence enough for it, and didst punish those who took and profaned it, and didst compel them to restore it again; so thou hast laid heavy Punishments upon us, and our whole miserable Nation, for rebelling against, and driving out of the Kingdom thy Servant the King, and hast compelled them to call him Home again, to the Joy of all good Men, and to the Wonder of all the World. O let this thy great Mercy be always before our Eyes, and never out of our Thoughts. Bless and preserve the King, and make him always gracious unto thee; infuse into his Heart a true and sincere Sense of thy stupendous Blessings, and make him often reflect upon his past miserable Condition, and upon every Circumstance of thy restoring him to his Greatness and Honour: Make and keep him gracious in the Eyes of his Subjects, and make and keep them dutiful and obedient, and loving to him, and make King and People join together in a new Acknowledgment and Thanksgiving for this thy new Mercy and Blessing upon them. Amen.

P S A L M XCVII.

THE Brightness of the Sun it self, though it be the Eye of the whole World, may be so clouded and eclipsed, that we may not behold the Splendor of it; and those Clouds may continue for long Time; but it can never be so eclipsed and darkened, but that we shall receive some Light and some Warmth from it. God may upon our Provocation remove himself to such a Distance from us, that we may not discern any Light of his Countenance, any Beam of his Favour to shine towards us; or we may drive him from us by our Unrighteousness, endeavour so to eclipse our selves by the Darkness of our secret Wickedness, that he may not see us; yet we shall feel in every State some Warmth, or some Cold, from his Influence; some Protection that may raise our Hopes, or some Mortification to correct our Presumption, that will make it manifest that he is neither withdrawn so far from us, nor we from him, but that he sees us, and hath a Hand long enough to reach us. Many learned Men are of Opinion, that *David* made this Psalm upon his Return, after he had been driven out by *Absolom*: A greater Mortification, a greater Evidence of God's Displeasure can hardly befall a Prince, than by the Rebellion of his Subjects; and of all Rebellions, that is the most dismal, that is contrived and raised by a Son of a Man's own Bowels; that he should withdraw the Hearts of the People from their Allegiance, is a Circumstance more pungent than the Defection it self: Yet the poor dethroned King, in the bitterness of his Agony, and the depth of his Despair, saw such a glimmering of Light, that he found God had not forsaken him; he who had suffered him to be turned out of his Kingdom, turned the Councils and Inventions of his Enemies to their own Ruin: And before his Light appeared fully

unto *David*, a Fire was gone out to destroy his Adversaries round about. If we are oppressed by the Power and Malice of merciless Enemies, and a greater Weight be added to our Affliction, by some unnatural Circumstance that attends it, we must wait God's own Time; and though Clouds and Darkness be so incorporated about him, that we can see no Light towards us, we may possibly discover his Lightning against our Adversaries, and his Anger so hot, that the proudest of them melt and tremble; and if we then rejoyce as we ought to do, more for the Vindication of his own Honour and Justice, than for the Destruction of those who did us Wrong, we may possibly make him so propitious to us, that he may make our Restitution and Reparation a part of the Judgment he inflicts upon them.

Because all Men profess to love God, and no Man is so impudent as not to profess it, he hath given us a Rule and Measure by which he will judge of our Affection, and we are to blame if we do not judge our selves by the same; our Love is not well compounded, if it hath not a Reverse; we cannot love him who is all Purity, and all Virtue, if we do not hate all Vice and Filthiness; it is not enough to decline and avoid the doing Evil, Policy and Discretion will dispose us to that, at least in some Seasons, and before some Company; and Men often approve that in others, which they do not practise themselves; but we must hate and detest it, by whomsoever it is countenanced or practised. Love is an Affection of the Heart, and if it proceeds not from thence, it is not worth the offering; and Hate issues from the same Fountain, and if it be not as perfect and as violent as the Love, it cannot be in the Place of a good Second. From the Heart proceed all evil Thoughts, Adulteries, Fornications, &c. and if the Hatred in the Heart be not strong enough to keep out, or drive out such Corruptions, so much is wanting of the Love as is wanting of the Hate, nor can one be perfect, if the other be not perfect too. If in the Courts of Princes we affect to be as like, or to do such Things as may please him upon whom we depend, we shall be very ill Courtiers, if we do not desire to make our selves as like him, and do all Things to please him, upon whom we depend for more than any other can give to us.

Merciful God, who hast manifested thy Kindness to us in many notable and signal Deliverances from the Hands of our Enemies, and hast caused thy Light to shine upon us in the Depth of Despair, and to lead us out from that Darkness: Give us Grace after this to love thee as we ought to do, and to manifest that Love, by hating all Things which will offend thee, and to take Delight in nothing but what may make us acceptable to thee. Amen.

P S A L M XCVIII.

THEN I commended mirth, because man hath no better thing under the sun, * says Solomon: And no doubt innocent Mirth is so far from being a Fault, that it is very acceptable to God, he expects it at our Hands; and it is one of the heaviest Circumstances of his Displeasure, and Denunciation of his Judgments against his own People for their Ingratitude and Idolatry by the Prophet *Hosea*, *I will cause all her mirth to cease*†: Since they had taken so much Delight in those Things which were so displeasing to him, he would not reform them, they should proceed still according to their Inclinations and Imaginations; but they should find no Satisfaction in it, their Mirth should cease: There cannot be a more uncomfortable Condition than to do all that a Man desires to do, and to find no Pleasure in it. Sighing, and sighing with Bitterness before their Eyes, was their Portion, against whom *God had drawn out his sword*||: And the very Question, Should we then make Mirth? was Argument enough in the Judgment of *Ezekiel*. It is very unseasonable and indecent to be merry before those who undergo any Affliction of what Kind soever; it is more to be merry when we are our selves under God's Chastisement. Not to be sensible what others suffer is a great Want of Kindness towards them; but not to be sensible of God's Displeasure in what we suffer our selves, can proceed from nothing but a mere Contempt of his Power and Majesty; in that Case Mirth is worse than murmuring, which hath somewhat still in it of Confession of the Weight and Strength of his Arm; but Mirth is a Denial, and renouncing him. Courage, which is the Effect of Patience, and a composing and submitting our selves to his good Pleasure, becomes us under the greatest Affliction, and makes it the shorter, and the more easy: But Mirth, which is an Affection of the Heart, in that Case is want of Piety, and a Disdain of the Correction. On the other hand, when God preserves or rescues us from a Danger that is even falling upon us, or removes a Judgment from us, which hath broken and almost devoured us, nothing is more our Duty than Joy of Heart; and if we feel it not, we are without any Sense of what God hath done for us, (which deserves the return of the same Judgment;) and if we do in truth feel it as we ought to do, we shall fill the House with it, and make such a Noise of it, that all Men shall know that it is not to be contained within our own Hearts, and they shall help us in the Acknowledgment of God's Goodness. True Joy can be no more concealed within the Heart, than great Sorrow can be concealed within our Eyes; both will out, and make others Partakers of it. There is nothing that God expects more from us, nor takes as a greater Argument of our Gratitude to him, than our signal and chearful Joy upon receiving any great Benefit from him: Nor is the Joy of our Heart enough, though he sees the full Extent of it, but he will have such a Manifestation of it, that the People may know it as well as he; the Noise cannot be too loud, though it be made with all the Instruments of Noise. They who would stifle all their Joy within their own Breasts, and look upon solemn and publick Manifestations

* Eccl. viii. 15.

† Hos. ii. 11.

|| Ezek. xi. 10.

festations of it, as a Mixture of too much Vanity in the praising and magnifying God, do not conform themselves to *David's* Precepts, or his Example.

GOOD God, suffer us never to be merry with what doth displease thee, nor to take any Delight in what thou hast forbidden us. Give us Grace so heartily and truly to repent of all our Provocations against thee, that thou may'st be weary of afflicting us, and thereupon take us again into thy Favour, and make us Partakers of thy Loving-Kindness. Make thy Power and Goodness notorious, by uniting us all to thee, in the Truth and Fervour of our Devotions, and then unite us one towards another in the Exercise of Love and Charity towards all; and then make us to celebrate this thy wonderful Obligation with such loud Acknowledgment, and Mirth, and Joy, that all the World may take Notice of thy Protection over us, and our Gratitude to thee. Amen.

P S A L M XCIX.

MEN cannot propose a better or more easy Way to themselves to attain to a Perfection in any commendable Course of Life, or in pleasing and becoming acceptable to God Almighty, than by treading in the Steps, and following the Example of Persons eminent in Skill and Virtue, who have arrived to that Degree of Credit and Reputation, that they would be glad to succeed them in. Examples are faithful and diligent Guides to lead a Man through the dark and slippery Passages of this World, and will not suffer him to go out of the Way without calling on him; and there cannot be a more manifest Evidence of the Power and Authority of Examples, than the depraved Condition of those, who contrary to the Motives of their Understandings, and the very Inclinations of their Natures, by giving themselves up to, and following the Examples of ill Men, (of whom it may be they have thought too well) have by Degrees abandoned all Thoughts of Virtue, and rejected all Suggestions and Restraints of Conscience, till they have surpassed and outdone in Vice and Wickedness, the Persons whom they only intended to imitate: Nor can we have a truer Measure, or a surer Foundation of Hope and Confidence in God himself, that he will protect and preserve us from or in any Danger or Distress, than from the Example of his blessing those Men, whom we do the best we can to imitate in the Performance of those Duties which made them acceptable to him: For that is the true and only Ground of Confidence that he will hear our Prayers, as he did theirs, because we have to the utmost of our Power obeyed his Precepts as they did; otherwise we have not followed their Example, and cannot expect their Reward: But God is not so very strict and severe to exact from us, that we arrive at the full Perfection and Excellence of those Persons whom we profess to imitate; if we do really endeavour it, and do nothing our selves which contradicts those Endeavours, he will either assist and enable us to make the same Performance, or gratify us as if we had performed as much. The Philosopher had so good an Opinion of the Favour, and Justice, and Bounty of the Gods, that he thought

thought they were not supercilious or scrupulous to admit and receive all those who did desire and endeavour to come to them: *Non sunt Dii fastidiosi, non invidi, admittunt, & ascendentibus manum porrigunt.* Men must ascend as far as they can, and elevate themselves in a devout Prospect towards God Almighty, and there will be a Hand that will help, and draw them higher and nearer to him. No Man ever applied himself to a pious Contemplation of the Power, and Justice, and Mercy of God, and exacted from himself a serious and industrious, and intent Animadversion and Reflection upon it, (a transitory perfunctory Thought of it will not do it, few Men can be without that) but he hath found how heavy and dull soever his first Conceptions seemed to be, that he made some Progress, and arrived at a delightful View of somewhat he did not see and comprehend before: *Deus ascendentibus manum porrigit.* If we are exercised under great Affliction, and undergo the Oppression of powerful and unjust Men, the best Men have done so too, whose Examples we would, but cannot imitate; and we may promise our selves the same Deliverance they had, because they had it from him, who looks upon and accepts the Will for the Deed, and (contrary to the Custom of Men) forgives those, upon whose Transgressions he takes Vengeance.

O Lord endue us with a true Understanding of all thy Precepts and Commandments, and with a due Consideration of that Obedience which thou expectest to them from us; and for the attaining to that perfect Obedience, give us a Desire and Grace to follow the Example of those, who, by their nearest rendring that Obedience to thee, have the nearest pleased thee, and so have made themselves the most acceptable to thee: Make us to walk in their Steps, at least never to tread so far out of them, as not to be admitted to appear before thee in their Company; but draw us to thee by thy Goodness, when our own Innocence cannot bring us into thy Presence. Amen.

P S A L M C.

TH E R E cannot be a more manifest Argument, that we do not look upon our selves as the Children of God, or value our selves upon that Relation, than that we do not pay the same Affection, and Duty, and Reverence to him, as we do to our earthly Fathers; and that we rejoice more in this our natural Relation than we do in the other. As all good Children pay a constant and devout Reverence and Obedience to their Parents, do all that they command them to do, and nothing that is forbidden by them, and no Prosperity or Superiority in Condition lessens this Obedience and Affection; so there are none so ill, so impudent, as to own and avow a Disrespect and Disobedience to that Relation; where Conscience doth not, Shame restrains them from such monstrous Impiety; and no Man dares pronounce himself to be an ill Son, because all other Men will pronounce him an ill Man, and a worse Christian: Nor is this Duty and Acknowledgment paid by us only to those who have begot us, but to such who have become our Fathers in a charitable

and bountiful Education of us, when our natural Parents have not been able to be at the Charge of it: To those who have supported us in the Storms of Fortune and Emulation, and contributed to our Preferments, we bear always as we ought to do, a faithful and a filial Respect and Duty; and if we fail in the expressing it in all the Ways, and by all the Means which Affection and Duty can suggest to us, or ought to exact from us, we are justly branded with the Reproach of odious Ingratitude: Yet the same, and much greater Obligations of the same Kind, makes very little Impression upon us, nor does raise our Spirits to make due Reflections upon the Acknowledgments we ought to make, and the Duty we ought to pay to Almighty God under the same Relations; as Children in our Original, and as Sheep of his Pasture, in the continual Benefit and Support which we every Day receive from him.

God hath made us, and cherished us from our Cradle, and provided for us, therefore we are his Sons; we are all elder Brothers, and can claim an Inheritance from him, an inestimable Inheritance, if we will be his dutiful and obedient Children; if we will not, the calling him Father (which no Man refuses to do) is but to mock him, at least to make only a Shew of such Regard as we commonly give to him who hath lived to be of so great an Age, that he can help no body else, nor himself: I say, he is our Father, if we will be his Sons; and it is in our Election whether we will be so or no, and we have a sure and infallible Way to know whether we are or not; if we do obey him, or heartily endeavour to obey him, we are his Sons, and he hath not reserved Power to himself to disinherit us; if we do not obey him, nor care to please him, we need no Act of Disinheritance by him, we have no Claim, we are not his Children. If our Earthly Fathers are never so much offended with us, and how justly soever, they can but cast us off, but disinherit us, they are still our Fathers, and we their Children, how unworthy soever; and 'tis in the Power of neither to extinguish that Relation: But it is otherwise in our Spiritual Relation: We may behave our selves so well, that God is our Father, and we may be sure of our Portion; and we may behave our selves so ill, as to be none of his Children. There is another Father who hath Children too, and his Children too may claim an Inheritance, a dismal Inheritance, that they must tremble to think of, and yet have so unavoidable a Title to, that it will fall upon them without their Claim.

*M*erciful Lord, suffer it never to be out of our Mind and Memory, that thou art our Father, and that we are thy Children, nourished and fed, and brought up by thee; and let us never do any Thing that may discredit and degrade us from that high Relation. As the continual Thought and Reflection upon this cannot lessen or abate our Obligation and Piety to our Earthly Parents; so make our punctual Performance of our Duty, which by thy Grace we make to them, a Spur to quicken the Sense we ought to have of thy Fatherly Kindness for us, and a Motive to increase and provoke our Gratitude to the most devout and fervent Acknowledgment of all thy Goodness and Compassion towards us. Amen.

P S A L M C I.

WE never make so useful and beneficial a Reflection upon God's Mercy, as when we take a View and Prospect of his Judgment too; nor doth his Mercy carry so much Lustre with it, as when we consider his Judgment; the Judgment he executes upon others, whilst he shews so much Mercy to us; or the light Judgments he lets fall upon our selves sometimes, with the Mercies he hath shewred upon us in Abundance, when we have so much Title to the first, and so little to the last. If we revolve how much he hath given, and how much more he hath forgiven, we cannot but confess that his Mercy is above all his Works: This Contemplation, circumspectly and piously entred upon, with a due Recollection of what every Man's own particular Experience can suggest to him of this Kind, would raise in us such a fervent Acknowledgment of God's wonderful Mercy towards us, that it would be attended with some devout Vows of Gratitude in our several Stations; which would produce so many several ways of sending up our Thanks and Praises to him, in every Man's reforming himself, and his own House, that it would produce a whole National Gratitude, and magnify his Name; and Kings and Princes would follow *David's* Example, and make their own Families the decent and pious Examples, by which their whole Kingdoms may form their own Manners and Conversation, in order to their obtaining the Joys of Heaven: For as no Precept hath so powerful an Influence upon the Hearts of Men, as the Example of Princes, so the Integrity of their Courts makes a strong Impression upon the Affection of their Subjects, and disposes them to a Respect and Reverence for the great Master of so illustrious a Family.

That Prince who hath first set his own Heart aright, well weighed the Station in which God hath placed him, that he hath set him as a Beacon upon a Hill, to shine and guide all Men into the way; that he hath all Light about him, and all Mens Eyes so fixed upon him, that his Errors are as clearly discerned as his Virtues, and both the one and the other more taken Notice of than other Mens; he will be therefore the more careful that his Light shall not lead any into dark Paths, and will have no People about him, but such whose Manners he would have his Children as well as his Subjects to transcribe. There are kingly Virtues, some Virtues so peculiar to Kings, that Subjects cannot practise them; a private Man with all his Strictness and Severity, can only reform himself and those few who care so much for his Dependance, that they will conform to his Directions; ill and corrupt Men will not only come into his Sight, but into his Company: But the Eyes of Princes are so delicate, that they will endure no such Sight; and ill Men, who know his Excellence, dare not approach his Presence. * *A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment, scattereth away all evil with his eyes, says Solomon; dissipat omne malum intuitu suo, vel oculis suis, says one Translation; his very Looks drive them away, he will have no wicked Thing before his Eyes, he hath an Aversion to all that is Evil.* The
Sons

* Prov. xx. 8.

Sons of *Belial*, whose Successors and Posterity have ever since given the World so much Trouble, were no other than Men who would live, *absque jugo*, without any Yoke; perverse and undisciplined Men, who would not live by any Rules, or submit to any Government; such who do too much Mischief in all Places, but in the Families of Kings would cause a Dissolution: If there be no precise Order and Obedience there, it will be impossible to plant it, with any Hope that it will flourish in the Kingdom.

There is not a more pernicious sort of Persons to be in the Presence and Favour of Princes, than Detractors; Men who out of Malice, and to revenge themselves for Discourtesies received, or Envy against any Man who they think is better esteemed than they are; or out of the Pride and Malignity of their Natures, do not love that other Men should be well thought of, (for such Men there are) take Delight, and accustom themselves to insinuate into the Ears of the King Prejudice and ill Opinion of good and worthy Men; or if they are in their Credit and Reputation above common and vulgar Detraction, however, to lessen the Opinion of their Abilities, that they may not be thought so able as they are esteemed to be, or to discover some notable Infirmary in them, which may reasonably be an Allay to somewhat that were otherwise excellent in them; and which, how true soever the Imputation may be, is the highest Detraction; there being no charitable Purpose to reform the Infirmary, but Malignity to take away or discredit the Reputation of an unquestionable Virtue: And therefore a just and a wise Prince will cut off those Detractors, who would make his Eyes dim, by raising a Mist between them and the Object that they should discern with all Clearness. As the Persons are justly odious to all good Men, as Enemies to Virtue, to Justice, to all Peace and Quiet, so the Art it self ought to be warily and thoroughly looked into; for Detraction is grown an Art, and studied, and many other Arts made subservient to it: Though it ends in Calumny and Slander, it doth not always travel in the common Road with it, nor keeps the same Company, nor administers its Poison in the same Way and Method; sometimes it calumniates by commending, when under all the Pretences of Affection, it insinuates into the Esteem of a Man, who could else receive no Impression of Prejudice, but as it proceeds from a Man who commends the Person whom it desires to hurt; sometimes by over-magnifying him, they weaken all other just Praise that may be given to him, and make the Truth of that suspected; and sometimes, as is said before, they insinuate some Crimes which discredit all his Virtue: But a wise Prince will discover all this Artifice, and will drive out the Artificers from his Court and Presence, as he would expel a Poison from his Heart; and with them all those Deceivers, who pretend one Thing and do another, and those who delight in any Falshood, and would apply his Power to the Oppression of any Man: Such who should be punished by the Laws if they were out of his Family, he will never protect in it.

As the Virtue, and Amity, and good Government in private Families, is a principal Ingredient in the constituting Concord and Union in the publick Government of the Kingdom: So above all other Men, Princes ought to be most careful and solicitous in the Choice of their

Ser-

Servants which make up their Family; especially that part of their Servants which they vouchsafe to make their Friends, by making them their Counsellors; who being never so faithful, can give them no better Counsel than they are able, than their Wisdom and Experience can suggest to them; and therefore he who makes Choice of them, must look that they are as able as willing to give him Counsel. Princes have the Choice of all their Subjects to elect their Servants out of; and if they prescribe the Rule that *David* followed, to elect the wisest and best Men, they cannot do amiss, nor can their Counsels miscarry.

** Righteous lips are the delight of kings, and they love him that speaketh right, says Solomon:* Indeed their speaking right, which is their Part, depends much upon the King's Delight, which is his Part. If Princes do not delight in hearing wholesome and wise Counsel, it will be difficult to raise the Confidence of very good Men to give it; Ill they can never give, Good they will hardly, if they find it is not grateful; the Delight of the Prince is a very important Circumstance to their speaking right who love him; and it ought to be some Encouragement to them, that the World is yet without an Example of an unfortunate Prince, who had a wise and faithful Council, and he took Delight to hear them.

O Lord, give us Grace to behave our selves wisely in our several Degrees, and only to love the Company and Conversation of good and honest Men, who are neither given to slander their Neighbours, nor to practise any other Deceit; especially inspire all Kings and Princes with a hearty Affection to virtuous and pious Men, and let them not suffer any other to come into their Presence, or to be employed by them; give them discerning Faculties to know those who are faithful to them, and to take Delight in hearing them; and give those who have the Honour to be delighted in, Courage always to speak the right to them, without Fear or Flattery. Amen.

P S A L M CII.

GOD will be sure to hear us, whatsoever we say, and to see us whatever we do, though he be not pleased with what he hears or sees; and yet the knowing that, doth not make us the more careful what we say or do; and therefore our Desire and Prayer to him that he will hear us, devoutly made, is most like to make us consider what we say, and to make our selves the more worthy to be heard; and to behave our selves so decently that he may not hide or turn his Face from us. There is nothing we are more unskilful in, or study less, than the Power and Integrity of Prayer, and yet we seem to practise nothing so much. We are at our Prayers upon every Occasion that displeases us, when we have nothing else to do, and it may be, because we have nothing else; but in our Business, in our Prosperity, when every Thing we do, every Word we say, should be most weighed and considered, we are least at our Prayers; at least at such Prayers as imply any Thought that we have need of Help. And, as if Prayer were a Melancholy Thing,

8 C

** Prov. xvi. 13.*

Thing, we go to it always in Company, (and it is well if we do so often) and diligently avoid the Solitariness of Prayer, love not to be alone at it, which makes the other the less effectual by much; for private Thoughts, and particular Reflections within our selves, prepare as well as dispose us to publick Prayers in the Congregation. As there is no Condition and State of Men, that doth not infinitely require this Exercise both of publick and private Prayer, and is infinitely improved by it, so none so much as the greatest and highest Condition of Men; the greatest Men should be most frequently and fervently at their Prayers: Poor and private Men wither away like the Grass, little taken Notice of; they can do little Good, and the Harm they do is for the most part to themselves; whereas Men of an exalted Condition, draw the Eyes of all Men upon them, are in a perpetual Smoke; and that Smoke (though it be like a Perfume that pleases them) whether it be the Smoke and Sweat of Business, and Industry, and Attendants, or the Smoke of Vanity, and Excess of Idleness, the very Smoke dries their Bones, and fills their Skin with Wrinkles, by not being otherwise filled; and they go to their Graves sooner than the other, and have a larger Account to make after; and therefore they should spend more Time at their Prayers, and be always at them, even when they are most in their Business; and they, and others too, will find that they dispatch their Business much the better. There is little doubt but when we are in any great Streight or Affliction, God will be sure to hear from us, whether in such Prayers as are fit for him to hear, is very much to be doubted; we too frequently in those Occasions, rather pray against other Men, than for our selves; and not against them, as they are Enemies to God, to Virtue, and to Piety, but as they are unkind, or injurious to us, or those we love; and if for our selves, it is rather to give us somewhat that we would have, than to forgive somewhat that we have done; and therefore too many of our Prayers ought to conclude with a Prayer, that God would not hear us, or incline his Ear to what we have said to him. Whereas if we had a true Devotion in our Hearts to form and compound our Prayers, and a fervent Motion from our Hearts to pour them out, we may reasonably, as well as piously believe, that every Prayer we so send up to Heaven, would prove effectual, and bring down that from thence to us, which we pray for.

The Church hath provided an excellent Form of Devotion and Prayer for all Men to concur in at their publick Service and Worship of God; and whoever reads and considers that Form, will find himself best inspired for his private Devotions, and how to ask whatsoever he can on the sudden foresee he may stand in Need of; however, he may very profitably transplant any Expressions from thence into his most private and most occasional Addresses to the divine Providence: Yet since the Infirmities of Men, as well as their Affections, are very different, and no Man can know the Thoughts of anothers Breast, or prescribe the proper Remedy to remove or extinguish that Corruption; nor is any Man himself at all times supplied with those Resolutions which occur to him at other Seasons, it is very commendable in all Men to exercise themselves in their Retirements and solitary Hours, in some particular and proper Action of Religion, with Reference to their own natural or occasional Infirmities or Necessities; the Form and Method

Method whereof cannot be prescribed by the most Religious Person; though the Spirit that is to govern and direct us may be much improved by such Conversation, every Man must judge for himself; and whether it be best to do it in prepared and conceived Words, or in any vocal Expressions, or only in mental Reflections, and Thoughts of God, no Man can direct but himself, because very few Men have a Similitude of Thought and Conceptions. A Man may justly apprehend that there is not a greater Obstruction to Devotion than the Unintentionness upon the Action they are at, the not keeping the Mind fixed enough to and upon the Subject of his Prayer, during the Time that he is pronouncing the Words of it; which being fixed in his Memory, by Custom flow from the Tongue without that Consideration from the Heart that ought to attend it; and it may be the most pious Men may find this Defect and Discouragement, whilst they pronounce very long Prayers together, which they are accustomed to; and that this Absence of Mind accompanies them more in their private and solitary Devotions, than in their publick Prayers, where the Observation of the Posture and Gesture of other Men may keep the Thoughts more fixed; and they who find this Infirmary in themselves, may in those Seasons fix their Minds and Thoughts very intently upon God, upon the Terror of his Justice, the Kindness of his Mercy, upon all his Attributes, without keeping their Eye to any Paper, or uttering one Word with their Tongue: And they who have brought themselves to this excellent Habit and Method of thinking, need not digest those Thoughts into any Expression of Words; for, no doubt, he that always thinks of God, prays always to him, and thinks how he may find him in Heaven. On the contrary, they who find their Thoughts always in Motion and inconstant, no sooner directed to one Subject, but straggling and wandring upon a thousand, are sure the Art of Thinking, as it is composing and retaining the Mind to one Object good or bad, is not enough attained to: And the same Men who in Company, upon the Delight of the Argument, or Reverence to the Persons who are present, can easily keep themselves in their Discourse very apposite to the Matter proposed, do not find when they are alone the same Facility in confining their Thoughts with the same Punctuality. For though a Man can speak but of one Thing at once, he can think upon one thousand; they therefore who have those volatile Thoughts ought to bind them up in Words, to fit them upon all Occasions, and to have no sooner a good Reflection in their Mind, than to put it in Writing, that by the Sound and Tune of repeating it, they may keep their Thoughts awake, and restrain the Velocity of their Motion. He who uses himself to both, or either, will prevail with God to hear him, and to turn his Face towards him, who did never hide it from any Man who did heartily desire to behold it.

O Lord, inspire us with the Power of Prayer, and with Knowledge how to pray, that thou may'st always hear us: Let us never approach thee in that Exercise, but when our Thoughts are upon thee, and then fix those Thoughts that they may not go astray, or wander from thinking of thee; at least not so wander, as to make us unworthy to return to thee. Let us always have thy Mercies before our Eyes to support and encourage us, and thy Judgments to terrify us, that we may have Confidence still to present our Supplications and Prayers

Prayers unto thee, and never the Impudence to believe that we do pray unto thee, when in truth our Mind is upon somewhat that will separate us from thee, and compel thee to turn thy Face from us. Amen.

P S A L M CIII.

WHEN God hath bountifully conferred upon us all the Blessings of this World, Health, Peace, and Plenty, and hath given us Assurance, that if we use those Blessings well, we shall enjoy the much more valuable Blessings of the next World too; he expects no more from us, no other Retribution at our Hands, than that we will bless him again, which in respect of the Debt we are to cancel by it, seems to be more than we can do. Alas! How can we bless him, who cannot subsist one Moment but by his Blessing? Or in Consideration of what we can do, must be so little, as it cannot be worth his Acceptance. What are all the Faculties of Man able to do towards blessing him? We can give him nothing but what he must first give us, and so our Debt must be still increased by what we pay him. But every Creditor may lessen his own Debt as he pleases, and prescribe the Manner of paying it according to his own Charity and Bounty: If his Debtor hath not Money, he can accept such of his Goods as he can best spare, or he can receive Satisfaction by his Labour, and by the Pains he shall take in his Service; and so his Debt may be paid that way. God is the universal Creditor, and though our Debts to him are so vast, that we can in no Degree be ever able to pay him; all that we are worth is no Recompence for the Blessings he hath bestowed upon us; yet he is much a more merciful Creditor to us than ever Man was, and hath set his own Royal Stamp upon our Lead, and our Brass, and our Pewter, and the other base Metals, of which we have plenty, and hath thereby made them of such a valuable Allay, that we may make lawful Payment in them; and if we have none of these, he will accept our Labour, our Time spent in his Service: If we do but acknowledge the infinite Blessings we have had from him, and seriously consider them, and him who gave them, and what he might, with at least equal Justice have given us instead of them; or if we do but heartily wish that we could acknowledge, and consider, and think upon them and him as we ought to do, he is content to look upon us as if we were upon even Terms with him; and upon our Desire and Endeavour to acknowledge his Blessings, even as our returning a Blessing upon him; and if we are not willing and ready to do this, we are worthy of nothing but the extremest Affliction: And it is with God, as it is with Man; if we have extended our Kindness and our Bounty, been loving and liberal to a worthless and a thankless Person, we are not so angry with him, as with our selves for making such a Choice, and are ashamed of what we have done. When God hath, instead of punishing us for what we have done, rewarded us for what we ought to have done; and instead of humbling us by grievous Afflictions, which we had Reason to expect because we had justly deserved, hath raised our Spirits by great Prosperity which we could not look for; and after all this, finds a Deadness upon all our Faculties, such a Coldness and Unconcernedness about our

our Hearts, no Sense of what we have received, at least from whom we have received it, he repents, and is even ashamed of what he hath done for us; and it is a terrible Thing to make God repent, to discountenance him so much as to put him to be ashamed; though he be much slower in coming to this Repentance and Shame than Man is, he is much quicker in his Remedy than Man can be with all his Passion. We may with that Precipitation have poured out our Benefits upon an unmeriting Person, that he stands in no farther need of us, and will enjoy them in despite of us, nor can we pull back or divest him of our Obligations, (which in it self is no decent or graceful Thing) if we have a mind to do it. God may, without taking any Thing from us which he hath given, reduce us to the utmost Poverty; if he discontinues to give, all his former Bounties have lost their Verdure, and wither away as the Persons who received them, nor can we subsist one Moment without his Supply.

God is willing to be our Physician, and to cure all our Diseases; other Physicians may be very willing, and not able; but no Skill can be wanting in this Physician; Diseases themselves, and Sickness, obey his Orders, and are cured as soon as touched by him: But it is in the Power of every Patient not to be cured, to disappoint his Physician by not following his Prescriptions, and not submitting to his Ordinances; and this Physician, though he can work Miracles in the Prevention of Diseases, in not suffering them to lay hold upon us, he will work none in the curing them, but effect it by having his Prescriptions and Directions punctually complied with; it is enough that he hath put the Remedy into our own Hands, if we will not apply and use it, it is we that refuse the Cure, and love the Disease. *Moses* himself did not better know the Way to please God after he had been forty Days and forty Nights in his Company, than we do, if we will delight to walk in those Ways; if we will not, it is Malice, not Ignorance that misleads us; and we are the more inexcusable because it is so easy, that we are always in it, if we do not go purposely out of it. The best worldly Physician, how knowing soever, and how prosperous soever, still administers Remedies almost as grievous as the Disease, in the Nauseousness and Pain which attend his Prescriptions, and works his Cure by Means scarce preferable to the Sickness that he cures: Whereas our Heavenly Physician prescribes no Remedy, which in the Operation is not as pleasant as Health it self; and the more difficult the Disease is, the more agreeable and pleasant is the Physick; and setting a just Value upon the Cure, and loving and esteeming him who wrought it, is all the Recompence he expects, or will receive for it. Who would not think that a very great Benefit cost him little or nothing, if he received it under no other Obligation or Condition than that he shall always love, and frequently think upon his Benefactor? Or would it be in his Power to forget such an Obligation? And yet God asks no more of us for all that he hath done, than that we should think of it, and esteem it, and love and thank him for conferring it; and yet we cannot remember this, nor decently perform it, when we are put in mind of it; and the Judgment we ought to inflict upon our Trespases and Sins, we lay upon his Favours and Benefits; the Remembrance of them is very grievous unto us, and we take no greater Pleasure than in forgetting them; which is not only an odious Ingratitude toward him, but a foolish and sottish Refusal to entertain the greatest

Joy into our own Bosoms that we are capable of: Since the greatest Delight we can take in any Prosperity he can give us, the greatest and most signal Victory he can give to any Prince over his Enemies, is not half the Pleasure in it self, nor hath half the Relish to us, as the pious Reflection upon that Prosperity, and that Victory, as it is an Earnest of God's particular Goodness towards, and his peculiar Care of us: And the revolving seriously such his Fatherly Kindness, would be to us what no Contentedness and Joy in the gross Pleasures of this World can be compared to, not only for the Innocence, but for the very sensible Satisfaction which a well disposed Mind finds in the Memory and Recollection of the Blessings God hath bestowed upon him in Seasons he could not expect them, and by Ways he could not contrive or imagine: And he who is most transported with the Pleasure of any Preferment or Countenance he receives from some great Man or Prince, finds another Kind of Extasy within himself, when he considers it as sent and handed to him by the particular Disposition and Indulgence of God Almighty, and his heavenly Favour towards him.

GRacious Father, since thou dost expect no other Retribution from us for all thy inestimable Benefits which thou hast from Time to Time bestowed upon us, but our humble, and dutiful, and grateful Acknowledgment that we have received them; and art more ready to forgive our Iniquities than we are to confess them; and art slow to Anger, when we are hasty to provoke thee; O! do not suffer us to fail in the Performance of so easy a Work on our Part, but make us to magnify that Loving-Kindness which we cannot deserve, and to extol that Mercy we are not worthy of: Make that lively Impression of all thy Favours in our Memories and our Minds, that from that very Impression thou may'st vouchsafe to continue them to us, and to renew them to our Childrens Children, that our Nation may still remain the Monument of thy Preservation, and continued Protection. Amen.

P S A L M CIV.

I Will meditate of all thy works, and talk of thy doings, was the Cordial that David prescribed to himself, when he was even overwhelmed with Despair of his own Condition: When he was ready to think that God had forgotten to be gracious, and that his Mercy was clear gone for ever; a very short Reflection upon the Works, and the Ways of the Lord renewed his Spirits, and restored him to his former Vigor. If Meditation be the Food of the Mind, that supplies it with Strength and Ability to prosecute any Design, and gives it Wisdom and Understanding to conduct it, without question the Meditation upon the best and the noblest Objects must be incomparably the most wholesome Nourishment, and enable the Mind to vanquish and to be superior to all the Assaults which can be made upon its Peace and Quiet. They who contemplate the Riches of God's Mercy, the wonderful Power and Wisdom in the Creation, his Method in forming all the Elements, and applying and disposing them to their several Uses and Operations;

Operations; his reducing the universal Waters into Seas, and Rivers, and Channells, that the Earth might consist by it self, and be cherished and refreshed, without being oppressed by the other; and then his bestowing Inhabitants on either, and providing for those Inhabitants such Food as they desired in either Element; his confining the Fish to the Sea, and all Beasts to the fruitful Earth; and at the same Time his carving and forming that Earth into several Shapes, and dividing it into Hills and Vales; Rocks and Mountains, with peculiar Inhabitants of Beasts, and Birds which seemed rather to dwell in the Air than upon the Earth, with such wonderful Variety of Prospect, that would both amaze and delight the Eyes of the wisest and most fantastical Beholder: I say, he who can present this wonderful Structure and Image to the View of his Mind, as by Meditation he may do, will think that this beautiful and admirable Composition could be prepared to no other Purpose, nor with any other Intention, than for the peculiar Habitation and Residence of the great Workman and Creator of all this. But when he shifts the Scene, and gives his Mind a new Prospect, and considers that all this Care and Art was taken and used to bestow this glorious Creation upon a new Creature, which was yet so admirably wrought and composed; and endowed, that he was even worthy to enjoy it; that all this thus finished and adorned, is freely given to Man to possess and take Delight in; and that he may do so, he is clothed with such a Divinity and Majesty in his Aspect and Countenance, that all the Beasts of the Field, and the Fowls of the Air, submit themselves to him as Subjects, and to be used and employed by him, as if he were their Creator; that the senseless Elements pay him voluntary Tribute, not only for his necessary Subsistence, but his lawful Pleasures; the Earth gives him Fruits to please his Taste, after his Appetite is satisfied, and the Seas and the Rivers send him Fish, emulating each other, and making him the Judge which Pasture makes those which feed upon it the more delicate and delicious: Who can range over all this in his devout Contemplation, without breaking out into that Extasy, Lord, What is Man that thou takest such Pleasure in, or providest such Pleasures for?

He who is thus awake, and possessed with these Reflections, will never let his Mind descend to consider with any kind of Trouble or Concernment, the Accidents which fall out in the Hills, or in the Vallies, the different Stages and Stations in the World, whether the Rivers do cherish and refresh the Vallies, or overflow and impoverish them; the powerful and great Men do support and enrich the inferior and ordinary People, or oppress and undo them; he knows well, all those irregular Motions will be reduced into Order by that Hand that can govern and chastise them; his Contemplation is restless, and carries him higher than that Prospect which he was but now so well pleased with; and he hath a lawful and vehement Curiosity to peep through the Canopy of Heaven, the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, into Heaven it self; and to discover what kind of Habitation and Abode so liberal and bountiful a Benefactor, who hath founded and bequeathed so rich, and so pleasant, and so glorious a World for his Creature Man to inhabit, that he can be in no Degree inclined to part with it, hath reserved for himself; since the Skill and Workmanship of this is a sufficient Argument in Reason to convince and satisfy him, that the other is much more perfect, more excellent, more majestick, where he himself

is to dwell and continue: And in the warrantable Fervor of this Inquisition, he mounts so high, as to take an imperfect View of the Lustre of God's own Palace, and to discover that there are even there, within the Verge of his own Court, Mansions provided for those who behave themselves so in this World, with that Integrity and Sincerity which themselves know to be the Condition and the Title that must carry them thither: And here he sets a Bound to his Curiosity, and fixes his Meditation, to watch and avoid those Rocks upon which he may split in his Heavenly Voyage, and discover those Obstructions which would stop or divert his Passage thither; and so keeping his Eyes still upon the Mark, he undervalues all that he must leave behind him, though they are Conveniencies when he stays; and that it is as much Contempt as he ought to have of this World, to be willing to leave it when it is Time; and to know that all the Pleasures in it are Pain and Distress, in Comparison of what he is sure to be possessed of in Heaven. He who hath brought himself to this delightful Habit of Meditation, (and he is much to blame who hath made no Advance to it) hath taken the World Prisoner, and may keep every seditious Temptation of it in Chains, that it can never lead him into that Rebellion that shall make a Forfeiture of his Title to the other Mansion he hath had a View of.

The Philosopher made a great Flight towards Heaven, in his Contemplation of the Folly and Vanity of the World, and Discovery that there was nothing in Life worth the Labour and Sweat that must attend it: *Quid est cur me in numero viventium, positum esse gauderem, an ut cibos & potiones percolarem?* It were to be wished that there were not too many Christians who think or make that the only Errand that they are sent into the World upon; and that they would conclude with him, *non est vita tanti, ut sudam, ut aestuem.* But he soared to a greater Heighth than they know how to keep him Company in, when he breathed out that Divine Ejaculation, *O quam contempta res est homo, nisi supra humana erexerit?* How miserable a Creature is that Man, who can be pleased with the insipid Pleasures of this Life? How ought we to be confounded with Shame, at our betrothing and wedding ourselves to the gross Delights and Vanity of this World, when he in his wise Rhapsody contemned them all, and had a Mind so erected, as to find that Virtue it self, which was the end of all his Studies, was only the Way to somewhat that was above it self? *Virtus, magnifica est, non quia per se beatum est malo caruisse, sed quia animum laxat ac preparat ad cognitionem celestium, dignumque efficit, qui in consortium Dei veniat.* The Truth is, it takes away all the Melancholy that Innocence and Piety exposes us to, in the declining the gaudy Allurements of Vice and sensual Pleasures, and in the Laughter and Derision of those who do indulge to themselves that License, and despise those who are not; because it leads us into the Company of Angels, and into the Presence of God himself, and gives us the Fruition of that Joy, which we may give our selves some of Relish in our exalted Meditations; which we need not be ashamed to learn from those who have not been taught to have the same Hopes with us.

O Lord, heavenly Father, who art cloathed with Majesty and Honour, and yet hast so far revealed thy self unto us, and those eternal

nal Joys which thou wilt vouchsafe to make us Partners of, if we make our selves worthy to appear in thy Presence, by our Behaviour in this World: Give us, we beseech thee, Wisdom and Grace to consider this World but as the Way and Passage to those Joys, and to esteem nothing in it worth the retarding our Journey thither. Let all our Thoughts be so exercised and employed in the Meditation of what thou hast done for us, and what thou dost expect that we shall do for and to thee, which is for our selves, that we may never entertain or admit any other Thoughts which would interrupt and disturb that Meditation. Amen.

P S A L M CV.

THE Fifteen first Verses of this Psalm, were part of that Psalm which *David* prepared, and caused to be sung, when the Ark was placed in the Tent which he had prepared for it; and though the very Reduction of it out of the Hands of the * *Philistines*, who had taken it in Battel, with those wonderful Circumstances which attended it, was a Miracle in it self worthy to be celebrated alone in the Joy and Pomp of that Day, yet he chose to do it rather in an Historical Repetition of all that God had done for them from the Beginning; presuming there could not be a more forcible Argument upon them to perform their Obligations, than by shewing them how punctual God had been in the Observation of all his Promises to them: And he put them in Mind only of the Good that God had done for them, of the Miracles he had wrought for their Protection and Preservation, without reproaching them with the foul Ingratitude they had shewed towards him for all his Benefits; lest their Remembrance of that, and of the continual Current of God's Blessings together, might dispose them to follow their old Example, in provoking the Power which was still resolved to oblige them; And he would not in so publick and solemn a Festival Day, the Subject whereof was known to all their Neighbours, who could not but take Notice of their Joy, cloud it with the Melancholy of any Reprehensions which might come to the Ears of their Enemies too, who might from thence have the less Esteem of that People. And sure *David's* Method had great Policy in it, as well as Piety: What greater Terror could come upon their Enemies who dwelt round about them, and looked upon them with Envy and Malice, as Strangers, Inmates, and Usurpers, who inhabited their Land without any Title but by successful Force, than to hear that God had given them this Land whereof they were now possessed, above Four Hundred Years before they came to possess it; and in the mean Time had wrought so many Miracles to preserve them, and greater in bringing them thither, and delivering up the Inhabitants of the Land into their Power, as if they were Owners, not Conquerors; so that the Return of the Ark unto them, which they had seen with their Eyes, and been amazed at, was one of the smallest Links of that large Chain of Miracles with which they were inclosed; and therefore it would be to no Purpose to endeavour to dispossess that People of what they came so wonderfully possessed

seised of, and secured in. Besides, it was like to make a great Impression of Fear and Reverence in their Hearts towards that Power which they could not comprehend; and since they knew not how otherwise to comprehend it, or to defend themselves against it, natural Wisdom would instruct them to make themselves well and gracious with that People, which were so much in the Grace and Favour of that Divinity; as all great Persons are pleased to see those who are esteemed and loved by them, to be well regarded by other Men; and there is the Policy of this Devotion. The Piety he had Reason to expect should have its full Effect; for what People could be so barbarous, as to celebrate the Bounty of such a Benefactor, without a lively Apprehension what Misery they must undergo, if he be ever irreconciled to them? Nor had they performed their Office, till they concluded that all these Miracles had been wrought for them, that they might observe his Statutes, and keep his Laws. Though they were not in this pious Jollity put in Mind of their Excesses and Deviations in their Murmurings and Repinings, even in those Seasons when they were most obliged, their own Experience and Memory did inform them how much that Current of Blessings had been diverted, and God's own Promises had been suspended, if not frustrated, by the Impiety and Infidelity of *Saul*; and therefore they found that it would be still in their Power, even to compel Heaven it self to reverse all its Purposes on their Behalf; and if the Memory of the multitude of good Turns which they had received, did not rouse them up to remember to do their Duty, they had forfeited all that had been promised, by not observing the Condition on which all those Promises had been made.

We are so many several ways like that People which performed this Solemnity; so like them in the Reception of infinite Favours, wonderful Preservations, and miraculous Deliverances; and so like them in the Retributions we have made in Murmurs, Repinings, and Contradictions, in all the Species of Ingratitude, that we may very reasonably apprehend and expect to be parallel with them in all the Judgments they have undergone, till we have ceased to be a Nation, and are dispersed and scattered over the Face of the Earth, as they now are: For prevention whereof we cannot use a better Method than *David's*, in recollecting, and frequently mentioning to our selves in private, and to others in publick, all the signal Mercies which God hath vouchsafed to shew to, and pour down upon us; and till they discontinued that Method, and forgot all he had done for them, he never shortned his Arm, or discontinued his Bounty towards them. Our Obligations are so much greater than theirs, that we had no Title by Promise on his Part, or Service on ours, but he hath chosen us out of many Nations, to make us happier than they, for no other Reason, but because he hath a Favour and Regard for us: How many of us have gone from one Nation to another, and from one Kingdom to another People, whilst he hath not suffered any Man to do us Wrong, nor the Combination between Kings and Princes to work Prejudice towards us; but brought us home again into our Country, and made us stronger than our Enemies, and freed our Country it self from Oppression and Servitude, and made it happier, and all who live in it, than those of any other Nation? And after all this, we neither praise nor magnify him for what he hath done, but murmur that he hath done no more; that he hath left some-

somewhat undone, the doing whereof might undo us: We are so far from seeking his Face, that we are afraid of his Presence, and would compound with him not to look after him, so he would not look after us. What can we expect from this ungrateful Oblivion and Desertion of him, but that he should withdraw all the Peace and Quietness that he hath given us, and give our pleasant Country to those who would with more Affection and Duty celebrate his Bounties? He might well have expected, that from our sober and wise Behaviour towards one another, and pious Behaviour towards him, in our united Acknowledgment of his Blessings, and devout Worship of his Name; others, who have not yet received so full Testimony of his Kindness, might more chearfully depend upon him, and conform themselves to our Examples: But, alas! we have not only discredited our selves by our imprudent and uncharitable, and dissolute Behaviour, as void of that Understanding, and Wisdom, and Virtue, as a People so preserved ought to have manifested to the World; but have discredited him, and made his Providence suspected, for having redeemed a People not worthy of his Care, who, by their Distraction in their Devotions and Worship of him, and by their profane Manners, and impudent and blasphemous Practice, make other Men less regard that Power which hath been so immediately propitious to us: So that if we do not by a speedy and serious Recollection of the unspeakable Benefits we have received from him, with all the Circumstances which distinguish them from what any other People have received, reconcile our selves to him, and so divert that Vengeance which he is even ready to throw at us; we must expect that he will magnify his great Name in our signal Destruction, since we would not suffer him to do it by our so signal Preservation.

O Lord God, after thy great and manifold Kindness which thou hast manifested unto us, a poor and sinful Nation, in the Sight of the whole World, as if we were a People that had more than an ordinary Title to thy Protection and Loving-Kindness: Sanctify we beseech thee our Hearts that we may never forget what thou hast done for us, and the Season in which thou didst it, even when all our Hopes were desperate, and our Spirits fallen to that Degree, that thou hadst helped and restored us, before we had Courage to think our selves capable of Deliverance. O let not the magnitude of that thy unspeakable Mercy be ever lessened or diminished in our Thoughts, and let us never think of it, but as an indispensable Obligation upon us to observe thy Statutes, and to keep all thy Laws. Amen.

PSALM CVI.

IF we accustomed our selves to take a just Survey of our selves, of the Frowardness and the Pride of our Natures, of the Perverseness and Tyranny of our Affections and Appetites, we should frequently think it fit and necessary to invert our Prayers, and deprecate God's Favours and Mercies, and pray for his Corrections and Judgments, or rather look upon his Judgments and Mortifications as his greatest and most transcendent

transcendent Mercies. If Men took that View of themselves, which others take of them in their highest Prosperities, when God pours down his Blessings upon them; observed the Haughtiness of their Looks, Gait, and Gestures, their proud Behaviour towards all who have need of them, and their servile Behaviour towards all of whom they stand in need, which every Body else but themselves do observe; and considered how very little they used to think of God in those Seasons; and then if they reflected upon their own modest Behaviour upon some Disappointment they had sustained in their Pursuit of some Office and Preferment, how often they used to pray to God in their Anguish and Affliction, and how fervent their Devotions have then been, they would confess how much better Men they are in the latter than in the former Condition, and how much more gracious God hath been to them in the one than in the other Visitation. Few Men are willing to confess this in themselves, but there are fewer who cannot if they will. The Truth is, we generally become our Adversity better than we do our Prosperity, because we oftner take an Account, are more conversant with our selves than in the other State, hear more what other Men say of us: For though it may be there are more speak of us in the Height of our Fortune, they do not speak so truly, at least not so much within our learning, as when we are low: When we are insulted upon, no Man courts us, no Man dissembles with us then; besides, we are more severe to our selves in our own Recollections, which is always the best Physick we can administer; and whilst we do it with Care and Fidelity to our selves, we are sure to enjoy good Health of Mind, whatever our Body suffers: We first betray our selves before any Body else can, and first flatter our selves before any other attempts it, discover that it will be grateful to us to be deceived, before other Men dare undertake to cozen us: There cannot be a greater Manifestation of a childish or a slavish Nature, than to be wrought upon more by Stripes than by Benefits, and to need the former to put us in mind of the latter; and there is nothing God expects more at our Hands than that we should reform this Villany in our Nature; so correct and subdue our Passions and Infirmities, that we may be fit for his Blessings of continual Bounties and Favours, without putting him to the Trouble of giving us any Chastisement or Mortification, which he delights not in; and it is his greatest End in the preserving the History and Records of his own chosen People with so much Care and Exactness, that the World hath not so particular an Account of any Transactions, the Life and Death of his Son only excepted, from the Oblivion of so many Ages, which hath covered all other Things of those Ages, that we might know how to value those wonderful Acts he still performs for our Comfort, Protection, and Preservation, and not imitate their Ingratitude and Stupidity, by compelling him to use those ungrateful Remedies, as unpleasant to him as to our selves, of afflicting and grieving, and of depriving us of the Blessings he hath bestowed upon us; that by the being without them we may become more worthy to enjoy them.

There are two principal Reasons which make the Continuance of this Method very necessary for our very evil Constitutions, Constitutions corrupted by our selves, and the evil Diet and Administrations we prescribe to our selves. First, Our not valuing the Benefits we receive of Blessings in this World, as sent us immediately from God, and for some

End of his own intrusting us with them. Secondly, Our valuing them too much, though sent by him, and setting our Hearts too much upon them, which it may be is as common and as dangerous a Transgression as the former: And from one of these two Causes those Chastisements and Clouds of Misfortune have proceeded, which frequently have befallen and covered very good and pious Men; but when they have concerned such Men, their Recollections and Applications have quickly dispersed those Clouds. We do not value the Blessings we enjoy, as sent from God, how publickly soever we acknowledge to have received them from him, when we do not use and employ them as if they were sent from him. God never made any Man great that he might be proud, nor rich that he might be covetous; he would have all Men who are raised by him, to be looked upon as Patterns and Examples for other Men to imitate for their Virtue and Piety; not to be looked at only for the wonderful Height they are in; such as other Men may be the better for their Lustre, not to be shadowed and oppressed by their powerful Branches. When God sows Honour and Preferments, he expects that Soil made fertile only by his Showers should yield them a good Crop, a plentiful Harvest: That Men raised in an extraordinary Manner to Degrees of Honour and Estate shall do publick Service to their Country, dispose them to look with the more Reverence upon Providence for giving them so great Blessings: That they take Care to instruct their Families, and their Friends, and their Servants, how they may procure the like Blessings by their Sincerity towards Heaven: And that they discountenance and suppress all licentious and vicious Demeanors in other Men, as unwholesome Diseases which infect the Air: If instead of this they become Examples to corrupt other Men, and make themselves eminent only in their Vices and Oppression, they shall find themselves quickly levelled with those they most despised; and that their Ruin hath drawn those Eyes upon them which their Virtues could not do; and they may behave themselves so in this Fall, as to ascend out of it to a greater Eminency.

They who do receive great Favours and Blessings, and look upon them as sent by God, and use them well, and to the Benefit of others, and do much good with them, may yet set too great a Value upon them, think them much more worth than in truth they are: We may be too apt to be contented with what God hath done for us, when we do not desire that he should do more; but with that he would suffer us always to enjoy that excellent Condition he hath placed us in, without advancing us farther: We often think our selves so much in Heaven already, that we have no mind to go thither, and are so well that we would be content to be no better. This is an extreme Over-valuing what God hath done for us, and a vile base Undervaluing what he can do for us. It is perverting and crossing the sole End and Intention of all his Blessings, which he gives us as an Earnest of what he intends to give us, and only to raise our Appetite to live with such a Benefactor, who so liberally supplies us when we are but in our Way to him; and we instead of a greedy Impatience to be at the End of our Journey, would fain continue still in the Way, and prefer the narrow Lodgings in the Inn before the beautiful Apartments provided for us in the Palace: And we ought not only to thank, but to pray to God that he would correct this sordid Appetite, by changing our Road, stripping us of those gaudy Conveniencies which

so dazzle our Sight, and causing us to finish the Remainder of our Journey through such dark and uneasy Passages, in such Afflictions and Calamities as may rouse us to a true and fervent Appetite, more to be with him than to be without those Troubles which are most grievous to us.

O Lord, we give thee humble Thanks for all the Happiness thou hast made us Partakers of in this World above our Neighbours, and above those who have deserved better, or as well as we; and we thank thee equally for those Chastisements and Mortifications which thou hast sent upon us, because we did not value the other as we ought to do; and we beseech thee to continue that thy Correction, till it hath subdued our stubborn Spirits, and made us fit to receive thy former Loving-Kindness, which then pour down upon us, that we may praise and magnify thy Name with Joy and Gladness. Amen.

P S A L M CVII.

THough all Afflictions or Inconveniencies which can befall us, are sent by God, come on his Errand to us, and cannot be removed but by him and his Goodness; and therefore we ought to apply ourselves to him in the Beginning when they are less grievous, that he will speedily set us free, or restrain their farther Excess: Yet we never think of him, never repair to him, or believe he thinks of us, till we know not what else to do, till all our Wits and Inventions fail us, till we find somewhat that we never found before, and then we are content to do what we never did before, resort to him for Help: But there are four signal Exigents and Necessities which immediately upon their first Approach drive us to God, and drive all other Thoughts from us of depending upon any Thing else; Famine, Captivity, Sickness, and Shipwreck: The boldest and the bravest Sinners who have contemned all the Influence of Providence, and rejected all the Overtures from it, have not been able to stand any of these Assaults, but tamely prostrated themselves at his Feet, and implored his Succour, which before they believed they could never stand in need of. Whereas, besides that he hath these Arrows always ready in his Quiver to shoot when he thinks fit, and he is sure never to miss; there is no Day of our Lives, in which we are not exposed to as inevitable Dangers as attend either of those four, if he doth not shelter and protect us; and therefore, we have as much to fear, and more to hope than in those Seasons, and should be continually disposed to the same Devotion which we so readily betake our selves to then.

Famine, which is terrible, may befall us in our greatest Plenty, as well as in our greatest Want; for not to be able to eat what we have, is as much Famine, and as grievous, as not to have any Thing to eat: So that when God gives us Health and Appetite, he doth as much preserve us from Famine, as he did the Children of *Israel* in the Wilderness; and yet we are so far from looking upon Health, the greatest Blessing in this World, as a Redemption, that we scarcely look upon it as an Obligation; we

we owe it to our own good Constitution, and are as prodigal of it, as any Thing which we think to be the Gift of Fortune. Health and Plenty may make us proud, very seldom make us humble; there is no Distress in that, and so nothing to make us cry to God to be delivered from; it must be literal Famine that must make our Souls faint, and then our Cry shall be loud enough. We have more Need, and oftner, in our Riots and Excesses, of his Help and Deliverances, than we should have if Famine were upon us; those have always Guilt and Provocations in them, and are repeated with Joy; and the Diseases, which are the Effects and Punishments of them, bring no Terror with them, nor fright us from calling for them again upon the same Conditions; no Resort to God Almighty upon those Occasions: Whereas Famine, whether for want of Meat, or want of Appetite, though it be sent as a Punishment for some grievous Sins, no sooner comes than it cures the Malady; there is no more Appetite to Sin, when there is no more Meat to satisfy the Appetite: So that Famine in it self is innocent, though it be the Effect of Guilt; and we ought to look upon it as a blessed Chastisement, when it reduces us to our Prayers, and makes those Prayers effectual for our Deliverance.

Captivity is another of those Sovereign Remedies, which kills and destroys Infidelity and Rebellion against Heaven. I speak not of those Imprisonments and Restraints of Liberty, which our Crimes and ill Manners frequently subject us to, in which we often think less of God Almighty, than when we were at Liberty, and in which we commonly enjoy the same, or more Liberty to do amiss than we had before; but I speak of that Captivity when we are delivered into the Hands of a cruel and merciless Enemy, deprived of our Country, and of all the Benefits of Life, but what our severe Task-Masters think fit to indulge to us, without seeing any way of Hope by which we may escape, and get free from our Servitude. When all the miraculous Favours and Preservations could work no Effect, and all God's Judgments were neglected by his stubborn People; this was his last sure and infallible Expedient, to awaken them out of their deepest Lethargy, and to make them cry loud and heartily for his Assistance, and prepare themselves worthily to receive it. They who have been afflicted with Want and Banishment, have undergone some light Resemblance, have tasted some Relish of his Captivity; and if that makes no Impression upon them, if they do not by devout Supplication to him who hath given them that Warning and Token of his Displeasure, redeem themselves from the Captivity of their unbridled Lusts and Passions, they may very reasonably expect, how distant and unlikely soever such a Judgment appears to them, to undergo that literal and dreadful Captivity, to be carried Captive into a strange Land; for God will make himself to be called upon one way or other.

The Third Impulsion, which in spite of all our Pride and Stubbornness, draws us to our Prayers, is so continually in our View, that it is strange we should stay till we are seized by it, which is Sickness, that no body fears, and no body hath Courage to contend with: We see Men bear great Pain very stoutly, endure the Knife and the Saw without shrinking, and give a Limb to a rude Surgeon, as if they were to have it again, and the better for mending; and those very Men, when they
are

are assaulted by Sickness, sink upon every Stroke: There is great Difference in the Impression that Pain makes upon our Spirits, and the other which is inculcated by Sickness; in the former the Heart is sound, and the Faculties of the Mind keep their Stations a good while, and can think and propose, or submit to Remedies or Experiments; but Sickness works by Mines under Ground, and undiscerned plays the Tyrant in our Veins, and in our Bowels, and scatters its Poison in Places we cannot see, and whither we can transmit no Antidotes; and when the whole Frame of Nature is shaken, we make all our Application to the God of Nature, look for Remedy no where else. If our Health doth not invite us to any Thought of him, if it makes what it abhors most, Adversity, without Effect, because we have little Pain with it; Sickness is a Sovereign Cure for all our Negligence, Inadvertency, or our most confirmed Infidelity; and therefore next the Health of Mind, which would keep God always with us, and by us in this World, we ought to pray that we may make our Passage into the next by the Sickness of our Body, that we may have the more Help to find him there, whom we have sought so little here.

When God made Man; and assigned him so large an Habitation, as the whole Earth to dwell in, he did not intend, at least he did not enjoin him to have that Curiosity, as to inhabit the Sea likewise, or to affect to know the Wonders of the Deep; they who delight to travel through that Element, affect a Pleasure that Nature hath not disposed them to; yet if they have not thought of the Creator of both at Land, they will hardly avoid thinking of him at Sea, the Winds and the Waves will shew him enough of the Depth without a Shipwreck; and he who hath not called upon his Name in that Peril, will not know him till he sits upon the Judgment Seat.

O God, who hast left us such infallible Testimonies of thy most severe Judgments upon a People thou tookest more Pleasure in, than thou hast Reason to do in us, though thy Blessings have been as signal upon us as ever they were upon them, and thy Chastisements much less signal, sanctify those thy Testimonies so to us, that those Examples may so terrify and reform us, that we may not put thee to the Exercise of thy Severity upon us by Famine, or Captivity, or Shipwreck; but by wholesome, and if thou findest it necessary, by frequent Sickness, cure the dangerous Sickness of our Soul, that we may enjoy Health with thee for ever. Amen.

P S A L M CVIII.

Bellarmino could find no other Reason why this Psalm is inserted in this Place, except it were to make the whole Number to amount to One Hundred and Fifty, since every Word of it is contained in the Fifty Seventh, and Sixtieth Psalms. That is a very good Reason why he should forbear enlarging upon those Words now, when he had made a sufficient Gloss upon the same Words in the two recited Psalms; but it is no Reason why out of those two this should not be taken out, and made

made a Psalm by it self. The whole Book of Psalms being only occasional Devotions of *David* (for most Learned Men take them to be all made by him, though some are applied to *Moses*, and others) upon the most emergent Actions and Accidents of his Life, and which are common to many other Men; and so the Subject of very many of them being the same, it is no wonder that some of either of the other two, for either of them contains much more than this, should be reduced into one Psalm; since it seems to comprehend the Remedy, and the Cure of all that Unquietness of Mind that *David* ever felt from the Power and Perverseness of his Enemies, from the Uneasiness and Distraction of his Afflictions, and from the Displeasure of God himself; which was, a Submission and Resignation of himself to God, and a chearful Acquiescence in whatsoever he should do, or suffer to be done towards him; this, and this alone set his Heart at rest, and composed all his Distempers.

Indeed, if our Heart is once fixed devoutly, and humbly fixed upon God Almighty, it may very well be very merry, it hath a Joy and Confidence that cannot be shaken, and cannot publish it too much; and the true Reason that we are disturbed so much with the ordinary Casualties of Life, the common Calamities which befall us, and which we cannot avoid, (for we ought to avoid them if we can; if they befall us, when we might have avoided them, there is great Reason we should be disturbed) is, because our Heart is not fixed, or too much fixed upon somewhat else; we may frequently think upon God, pray to him, and hope for Help from him, and yet not have our Heart fixed upon him. We may have some other Ends in asking, than he hath in giving, consider our selves too much, and him too little; and the Blessings we may receive then, though they seem to our Purpose, will not prove such as we expect. We may think that we have fixed our Heart sufficiently when we leave our selves so wholly to God, as to do nothing for our selves, remit all to him who knows what is best for us, and neither think or do any thing to incline him to think of us; and too many have this lazy Dependence upon him; but this is far from having our Hearts fixed: Providence it self hath not so little to do, as to do any Thing for those who are idle, and who will do nothing themselves, or for themselves; Industry is as necessary as Prayer, and seldom is without Reward. Providence may watch over us when we are asleep, we were in ill Case else; but we must be awake when it promotes us; we must help it by our Innocence and our Industry, if we expect it should help us with its Interposition and Protection. There is no Question, when our Heart is fixed, we need take no other Care, but that it may never be unfixed, and in truth it will need little of that if it be once fixed; but we cannot take too much Care, be too sure that it be fixed; since thereupon all our Presumption depends. Nothing was ever fixed by Chance; there goes Deliberation, and Art, and Industry to all fixing; and if it can be removed without a general Concussion, it was never fixed; what it is fixed to must be rent and torn asunder before that be removed that is fixed. Since then we are sure, that the Object to which our Heart is to be fixed can suffer no such Violence, that it can never be stirred; we may be as sure, whenever we find our selves shaken, or shaking, that we never were fixed. There must be an Aptness and Consistence in the Substance and Subject, before one Thing can be fixed unto another, which is a Kind of Incorporation. No loose, spungy, corrupt Substance can ever

be fixed to what is pure, and firm, and sound, which will always remain so, when the Corruption of the other is still mouldering away. We must have all the Looseness, and Spunginess, and Corruption of our Hearts removed and taken away; all our vain loose Desires and Appetites, all that Spunginess which sucks in Imaginations from the Pride and Folly of worldly Greatness; all that Corruption which continually suggests to us, Hopes from the Power of Princes, or the Kings of the Earth, must be rubbed off, and torn from our Hearts, before we can pretend to fix them upon God. There is nothing hinders us more from doing it than believing it easy to be done, and that we can do it when we please; whereas the Benefit and Advantage we receive by it, is too great to be purchased with a little or casual Pains; it must cost us Sweat and Tears, and it may be Blood too, before we can fix our Hearts on him as we ought to do, which in an Instant wipes off all that Sweat and Tears, and stops the Blood, and puts us into the highest Tranquillity of Body and Mind, that Health it self can desire.

When we are thus fixed, we are above all the Assaults of the World, superior to all its Temptations; in what pleasant or unpleasant Dress soever it appears to us, we can neither be allured nor terrified: The greatest and highest Prosperity doth not exalt us, because we do not believe it, and know why it is sent, and value it accordingly; if we can make others happy by it, we have applied it to all it is good for: Adversity doth not depress us, because we had it in our View, expected it, and so were not surprized by it; we know the utmost it can do, and have it in our Power to make it do us good, contrary to its Nature, which is a Kind of Triumph over it; we look upon all the Ill that can befall us, as already come to pass, upon our Estates and Fortunes as taken from us, and in the Possession of other Men, upon our Wives and Children as Blessings we are already deprived of, and upon our Country as a Place we are banished from; and whosoever can calmly and composedly consider all this as fallen out, because it may fall out, hath made a fair Advance to be out of the Reach of Fortune; as many Philosophers have, or have thought they have done upon the pure Wisdom and Impulsion of natural Reason; but whosoever undervalues all this, because he hath fixed his Heart upon a nobler Object, upon God, he, and he only is sure never to be startled or moved, from the Influence which might otherwise naturally result from those Relations when they seem never so much extinguished; but that Fixation hath left no Part or Corner of the Heart to rest upon any other Place, any where else, the whole Heart is fixed, and it can never be divided: We frequently see a Man's Thoughts so intent, and his Eyes so fixed upon one Object, that during the Time they remain so, he scarce hears, or sees, or thinks upon any Thing else; and if the Objects could undergo or feel any Impression, it may be he would be always fixed there, or be delighted in nothing else. God is so well pleased when we fix our Heart upon him, that he yields to the Impression, and makes Room for it, that it may lodge with him, cherishes and strengthens it, by giving it all it cares for, or which is the same Thing, makes it care for nothing but what he gives; and when he seems to others to have cast us off, by suffering our Enemies to prevail over us, he supports our Heart still with a Confidence in him, until he brings us to the Port where we would be.

O God,

O God, who hast never failed any Man that hath put his Trust in thee, and art the only Person upon the Earth, or in Heaven, who hath kept all the Promises he hath made: Let us never be so weak, or so wilful, as to rely on any Help but from thee; make us sollicitous to please thee, and industrious to do all that thou commandest us; and let our Hearts be so fixed upon thee, that we may take Joy and Pleasure in any Condition that may befall us, as that which thou knowest to be best for us, and will improve, when thou findest we will be the better for it: And in the mean time, let us acquiesce in a full Assurance that thou wilt tread down all our Enemies round about us. Amen.

P S A L M CIX.

MANY of the Fathers are of Opinion that this Psalm was written wholly of our Saviour, and apply every Word of it to him, to Judas, and to the Jews; yet other very Learned Men do believe that David intended it only against his own malicious Enemies who wounded him with their Calumnies and Slanders; those *Flagella Linguae*, the Strokes of the Tongue, which do as much need the Protection and Assistance, and Vindication of Almighty God, as any Afflictions which can befall us in this World. *If a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches,* * it will very well become us to be more troubled, to be more sensible at the Loss of it than at the Loss of all the Riches we are possessed of; and they who rob us of so precious, so inestimable a Jewel, have more to answer to God Almighty, as well as to us, than for any other Trespas, any other Violence they can commit, because it cannot so easily be repaired: And they who do condemn the Reproaches, and Slanders, and Calumnies which ill Men raise against them, do not so much condemn their Malice, as their own Innocence; if they valued that enough, they would not think any Spot cast upon it to be condemned: For though the utmost Malice of lying Lips cannot in truth deprive us of our Integrity, of the Testimony that our own Conscience will always administer to us, and which at last will shine again with its full Lustre; yet it is no small Inconvenience and Mischief that we sustain, when it is clouded and eclipsed by Obloquy, and whilst it deprives us of the Testimony which good Men would give to us; nor can the best Men do half the good they would do whilst they lie under the most unjust Reproaches: That Logick which once prevailed in the Roman Senate when a good Motion was rejected, because it was made by an ill Man, *De honestabatur pessimo authore*, will always be too powerful in the World; and the wisest Management, when an unreasonable Prejudice is contracted, though by the foulest Combination and Conspiracy, will not be able, till that be removed, to advance the greatest Benefit, or prevent the greatest Mischief by his Advice and Counsel; and therefore we ordinarily see, that wicked Men begin their worst Designs against Princes and States, with Backbitings and Slanders, traducing their Persons and their Government with Lies and Reproaches, that

* Prov. xxii. 1.

that thereby the Minds of Men may be corrupted, and have a better Opinion of what they do, because they have a very ill one of those against whom they do it. We never see any notable Act of Injustice and Oppression done, but the Person is much defamed first, to make him the fitter to be injured, when he seems not worthy to be pitied; and therefore St. *Paul* * puts Backbiters and Haters of God together, as if they did not love the Majesty of God, who have no Ingenuity in calumniating their Neighbour. God had so signal a Tenderneſs of the Reputation of his People, that in the first Body of Laws that he put himself to the Task of compiling, he provided, that if a Man traduced his own Wife, † *the elders of the city should amerce him in a hundred shekels of Silver, and give them to her Father, because he had brought up an evil name upon a Virgin in Israel*; and deprived him likewise of the Privilege which he had before of putting her away. A good Name is too precious a Thing to be left to the rude Tongue of any licentious Person, without a very severe Penalty for the abusing it.

The stroke of the whip maketh marks in the flesh, but the stroke of the tongue breaketh the bone, says the Son of ‡ *Syrach*: It wounds and disables a Man from going Abroad, no Wisdom, no Uprightness preserves a Man from it: And *David* knew not what to do in the Case, but to give himself unto Prayer, to resort to God for Shelter and Protection; and to desire him that he would not hold his Peace, when lying and deceitful Mouths are opened against him, but that he will speak louder than they; silence their Tongues, and vindicate his Innocence. It is a Thing very much to be lamented in Christianity, to see with what Greediness and Alacrity Men run to the defaming one another, that it is growing Matter of Custom and Conversation, Vanity and Wantonness, and Wit carries them to it even without Malice, and Men hear one another traduced and slandered, without the least Tenderneſs or Concernment; which can proceed from nothing but want of Humanity, as well as defect of Justice; and if it were not for danger of the Law, they who thus conspire the murdering of Men's Honour and Fame, would as pleasantly concur in the Murder of their Persons; nor will the Guilt of the one be an easy Charge against them at the high Tribunal, though they are not guilty of the other: We ought to be the more careful and circumspect to avoid and discountenance this customary License, because the Mischief that results from it, is frequently greater than the Person who works it intends it should be; a Scandal once thrown out, how harmless soever, receives an Increase of Poyson and Fierceness from every Hand that takes it up, and sends it abroad again, and the Reporter doth equal Injury with the Contriver; a backbiting Tongue hath cast out virtuous Women, and deprived them of their Labours; a calumniating Jest, nay, a libelling Look hath begotten very tragical Mischiefs; but though the Mischiefs are not easily repaired, and the Causes of them many times not discovered, yet they seldom escape some signal Punishment, some Retaliation that makes it manifest to them that they are discovered, though the Person injured least suspects them. They who love such discovering Words, who exercise that License of the Tongue in exposing and prostituting the precious Reputation of their innocent Neighbours to Reproach and Infamy, seldom

2

* Rom. i. 30.

† Deut. xxii. 19.

‡ Eccl. xxviii. 17.

miss their Reward in this World, escape some very remarkable Judgment here, as they are sure of it hereafter.

*He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander is a fool, says * Solomon: Nothing more easy than to conceal Malice: Dissembling, which is Lying, does it very securely, it will be long before it be discovered; and the uttering, the transmitting a Slander, makes no such present Noise, that the Author may be discerned: Yet with all his Craft he is but a Fool, and wants Wit as well as Honesty. He will find that he is discerned by one who can order him to be paid in his own Coin, set a more wicked Person than himself over him, to prepare a Condemnation for him, before he is judged or heard; as he loved Calumnies, and delighted in Obloquies and Lies, so they shall cover him as a Garment, and hide the little good that is in him from the Eyes of all Men. His Affliction shall be aggravated, by seeing all the Dirt his rude Hand hath cast upon innocent and worthy Men, so fully and clearly wiped off, their Reputation and good Name so entirely vindicated and restored, that there remains no other Memory of it, but what must be a Monument of his Shame; and to make his Misery compleat, he shall find none to pity him; and when his Calamity is at highest, all who knew him shall think it less than he deserved; his Posterity shall inherit nothing but his Infamy, and his Sin and his Punishment shall be kept in Remembrance from Generation to Generation.*

O God of our Salvation, who can'st only hide us from the Scourges of the Tongue, and preserve us from being devoured by the sharp Teeth of lying and malicious Men, shelter us, we beseech thee, from this unmanly Violence; and let us not, for adhering to Truth and Innocence, be made a Prey to those who delight in Calumnies and Slanders, and seek only to disparage and disgrace those, whose Integrity is a Reproach to them: Preserve and support the Reputation and good Name of those who do heartily desire to serve thee, and to suppress the Practice of any of those foul Sins which thou dost detest. Blast the Credit of all those who raise Scandals and false Reports upon their Neighbours, that their Malice and Impudence may be discovered and detested; and make us all not only just, but tender and compassionate of the good Name and Reputation of every Man, as of the greatest Ornament thou hast bestowed upon Mankind in this World. Amen.

P S A L M CX.

THERE could not be a better way found out (though that was not sufficient) to keep the Children of *Israel* in their Integrity towards God, than by the frequent putting them in Mind, and fixing in their Memory the History of all the Miracles which he had wrought for them, from the Time of their being in *Egypt*, to their being in a triumphant Condition in the Land of *Canaan*; in which they had been Eye-witnesses of more and greater Miracles than all the World besides had been acquainted with from the Time of the Deluge. All

8 H

that

* Prov. x. 18.

that he expected from them for all his Mercies, was that they would acknowledge him their God, depend upon him, and not have Recourse to other Gods, from whom they had received no Benefit, and who had never, or could ever do good for those who depended upon them. And if the Memory of all the Wonders he had done in *Egypt*, their walking through the Sea as upon dry Land, and seeing all those who pursued them covered and drowned in that very Sea; if their having found Bread in the Wilderness, and a dry Rock having given them Drink when they were at the point of fainting; if the subduing many Nations more warlike than themselves, and putting them into the quiet Possession of their Habitations and Dominions; and if all this would not imprint a Notion of his Omnipotence, and paternal Affection in their Hearts, in such indelible Characters, that they should never be in Doubt to whom they ought to pay their Vows, or whither to repair in their Distress, they must be more brutish Creatures, and more unworthy future Protection and Preservation, than the Fowls of the Air, or the Beasts of the Field.

We are much more unexcusable than they, if after the clear and full Information we have received, and which is every Day inculcated into us, of the History of the whole Life and Death of our Saviour, the infinite Benefits we have received from him, and the infinite Torments he endured for us, we do ever forget the Matter or the Manner of those Obligations; and if we do remember them, and the Reason and the End of conferring them, we have done all he expects from us. But if by the vain Hopes or Fears of this World, our Ambition of Honour and Preferment, or our Apprehension of Punishment or Disgrace, we are startled in Performance of our Duty to him, and Observation of his Commands; we have, pretend what we will, forgot all he did, and all he said; how much he despised the World, and all the Temptations thereof, out of his Love and Value of us, and only to teach us the way to come to him in a better World. If we are terrified by the Power and Threats of Princes, from doing any Thing which he hath enjoined us to do, or to act any Thing that he hath forbidden us to do, we have forgotten that Kings are to tremble before him for those very Threats, and using the Power he hath given them so unrighteously, whilst we shall at the same Time be commended and justified for being obstinate in his Commandments. There needs nothing but a constant and due Reflection that there will be a Day of Judgment, no Man knows how soon, and that he who died himself to save us, is to sit Judge upon that Day, to make us appear before him with Confidence, as fit Objects of his Mercy.

O Lord, give us Grace in the highest and softest Delights which we are pleased with in this World, to remember that thy only Son laid down his Life to purchase a much better World for us to live in; and that our preferring those before this, is to renounce any Benefit by his Death and Passion, which is to be as miserable as his greatest Enemies can be. Let us never be without that Image before our Eyes of his Judgment Seat, where no Distinction will be made of Persons, but as they have walked in the Paths prescribed by him; for which Integrity they shall have Precedence of Princes who have displeased thee; and keep our Steps steady in those Paths. Amen.

P S A L M

P S A L M CXI.

THERE must be a wonderful Frowardness and Perverseness in the Mind of Man, that though nothing can so worthily possess and fill it as the Thought of the wonderful Works of God, yet it is less fixed and intent upon that Subject, sooner weary and tired with considering it, than upon any other Contemplation whatsoever; which proceeds not from the natural Unsteadiness, and continual Motion of the Fancy and Understanding, which is not rambling at other Times, and is easily enough restrained and confined to any Object it takes delight in. If we are disposed to Pleasure or Profit, we can pursue either incessantly, and without Weariness, and think of nothing else. When our Ambition engages us to solicit the Protection or Countenance of any great Man towards satisfying our Desires, we can wait with all Diligence and Patience imaginable, weigh every Word we say to him, and are seldom weary of speaking, till he be weary of hearing us, and watch and lay up every Word he says, and by our Motion and Looks sufficiently inform all those whose Eyes are upon us, that our Thoughts are fixed, and riveted to our Business. If this be so, as every Man's Experience puts it out of Doubt that it is so, in what Confusion ought we to be, that we less consider and think upon what we say to God than what we say to the King, and are less circumspect in our Prayers to the one, than in our Speeches to the other: Whatever we ask of the King, we ask so much with our whole Heart, that if we obtain it not, our Heart is even broken; when we are so unconcerned in what we ask of God Almighty, so absent when we ask it, so little intent upon what we would have, that we scarce know whether he bestows it upon us or no. We use great Industry, great Impatience and Vehemence in all our Addresses, except only in those for the Kingdom of Heaven, wherein there is no Vigor, no Activity, no Warmth. It is too low, and too vile an Opinion of any Christian to believe that he hath in truth more Reverence for the King than he hath for God, or that he doth in his Heart desire any Thing in this World so much as he doth to be possessed of the Joys of that which is to come; and yet upon the most charitable Prospect that can be made upon the Actions of Men, there seems to be too much Ground for that Opinion; and God must be wonderful merciful to Mankind if he doth not himself make that Conclusion, who judges always of the Tree by the Fruit: And therefore we cannot be too severe to our selves (since we must confess how sincere soever our Thoughts may be, we are very unhappy in our Expressions) in making an Enquiry from whence it proceeds, that there appears or seems to appear more Fervor in us towards the attaining to the good Things of this World than to the compassing those that are more inestimable, and which cannot be got till the next; and that our Application and Address to great and powerful Persons seems more humble, and more constant, and more depending, than those which we make to God himself in our most solemn and publick, or our private and reserved Devotions; and from this Disquisition we may so rouse up our Spirits, that there may hereafter appear more Life, and Vigor, and Intentness in our Devotions than there hath been, and in all our Actions,
how

how much soever directed to the World, such a Fear of the Lord, that Men may have Cause to believe that our Thoughts are upon him, and chief Dependance upon his Providence for the conducting and governing even those Actions.

The Pleasures, and Delights, and Blessings of this World, are so much more proportioned to our Faculties and Conceptions, and even the Power and Greatness of the greatest King is so much within our Understanding and Comprehension, and we are so well acquainted with, and informed of the utmost Limits, within which our Duty and Submission, and Dependance upon that Majesty, may or ought to be expressed, that it is no Wonder, and it is to be hoped no Fault, if our Conceptions are quicker, and our Expressions more voluble, and even our Sense seems more relishing of the gross and unrefined Delights of this World, which were likewise made to be enjoyed by us with Moderation and Temper, and the utmost Extent whereof we have Words and Language which will fully reach and express, than of those Notions of the bright Joys, and incomprehensible Pleasures of Heaven, which no Eye hath ever seen, and no Words can in any Degree express; and going about to express them by the most sublime Reflections which can occur to us, is but to dishonour and draw them down to our poor and vulgar Imaginations; and we have the same Excuse for seeming more apt, and prepared, and disposed in our Applications and Addresses to the earthly and worldly Majesty, with how much Duty and Veneration soever we look upon it, and acknowledge the Distance between it and us to be very great, than we are in our most religious Devotions to that Divine Majesty, which we neither have, nor can ever behold in this World, and so cannot but tremble in all our Approaches to him, having but very weak and faint Notions of what Words may be used to him, or what manner of Address will be most acceptable to him; neither of which will be clearly known and understood by us, until we have learned another Language in that Place where his Habitation is, and ours must be, when we shall be clearly informed what Kind of Adoration we ought to pay him; and till then we may piously hope that he will accept, and be better pleased with a devout and silent Admiration of his Greatness and Goodness, than with any unskilful Expressions by Words of what our Heart doth as unskilfully conceive.

But then Admiration doth possess and fill the Heart, at least as much as any other Passion or Affection can do: We cannot be said to admire what we do not think of, nor longer to admire, than our Thoughts are full and fixed upon that Subject: So that a devout Admiration, and serious Contemplation of God's Mercies towards us, though it should be restrained only to what he hath done for us for our own Particulars, the Benefits he hath vouchsafed to confer upon us, and the Mischiefs and Inconveniencies he hath preserved us from, will be as composed an Act of Devotion, as much praising and magnifying his Name, as he expects from us; because our whole Heart must, and cannot but be at that Time so taken up with that Admiration, that we can think of nothing else; at least of nothing that cannot consist with, and must contradict that Admiration. It is absolutely impossible to admire and displease God at once: Nor can we at the same Time adore that Goodness, and Power, and Majesty of him, whose Laws and Commandments we violate and contemn.

I

Merciful

Merciful Lord, let all our Actions and all our Thoughts be founded upon a devout Fear of displeasing thee, and a devout Admiration of all thy glorious Acts, and thy particular Obligations towards us: Let the Knowledge and Consideration of thy Justice and Uprightness, support us in any Oppression we undergo by the Power of our unjust Oppressors; and the Confidence in thy Mercy uphold us, when the Weight of our own Iniquities endeavours to press us down. Restrain all our Affections from taking delight in any Thing that may offend or displease thee, and constrain and fix our whole Heart in an Admiration of thy Divine Majesty, and in a constant Resolution to observe and do what thou hast commanded. Amen.

P S A L M CXII.

IF Men could be persuaded that Sincerity and Uprightness, that a virtuous and a pious Life is the Way to be great, and powerful, and rich in this World, as much as they believe it to be the Way to Bliss in the next; that they shall leave the larger Posterity for their Integrity, and that that Posterity shall be lasting and blessed upon their Account; the World would be quickly replenished with a better Race of Men, and there would be no other Contention upon Earth than who should attain most Virtue, that they may attain most Riches: But alas, all this Hope or Imagination is blasted and contradicted by the constant Experience of the World, by the uninterrupted Current of the Prosperity of the Wicked, who in all Climates, and in all Ages have the Advantage, have spread themselves like the green Bay-Tree, flourished in their present Possessions, and left those Possessions to the Heirs of their Unrighteousness; whilst Virtue and Innocence have been oppressed, and Men frightened from adhering to it, by the insupportable Calamities and Contempt that attends it: So that there must be some other Arguments found out to make it lovely, and to persuade Men to embrace it, than the outward Glory and Felicity which they shall possess. And yet after all this Experience, and the melancholy Reflections upon the Height and Splendor of prosperous Iniquity, the Greatness and Power of ill Men, and in Comparison thereof, the low and mean Condition in which much better, wiser, and more accomplished Persons are confined to; upon a reasonable and strict Enquiry we shall find much of that Happiness and Prosperity which we envy or repine at in those Men, is but imaginary, and not so sensibly enjoyed by them, nor so valuable in it self, as the more despised State and Condition of the uprighter Men; that there is so great a Difference even in the Plenty which they seem to be possessed of, that though one appears to have greater Abundance, the other hath in truth the greater Riches; setting aside the Peace and Content of Mind: He is in greater Plenty, he hath more the Benefit of Wealth, he hoards up less, but he uses more; the good Man possesses his Wealth, the ill Man is possessed by it: If he leaves not more Children behind him, the few that do remain of him, last longer, and retain a better Name, than the numerous Issue of the proud Oppressor; besides he leaves an ample Progeny of just and charitable Actions, which generate when he is dead, and his

Example still raises Votaries to his precious Memory: And as the Wealth of the honest and good Man is always well got, so it produces another Effect, he is always the better for his Riches, and does the more good; whereas the ill and corrupt Person cares not how wickedly he obtains his Wealth, and the more he gets he is by so much the worse; he is the more proud, the more insolent, and applies it as unjustifiably as he got it.

The proud and imperious Transgressor is always irresolute; every Accident perplexes him, and he knows not what he is to do: If he be controuled by some higher Power, and his own abated, he is distracted, or at least dejected to that Degree, that he hath no Use of his Faculties; and even whilst he enjoys all that he hath set his Heart upon, he is still afraid of evil Tydings, his Fears grow faster than his Hopes, and his guilty Sleeps are more terrible than his want of Sleep, and he knows no Pleasure but in the Admiration of other Men: Whereas to the Upright there ariseth a Light in the Darkness; let it be what Kind of Darkness it will: If the Malice and Credit of his Enemies have by their Calumnies and Slanders raised a Mist to darken his Reputation, to cloud and eclipse his good Name, he hath not only the Light of a good Conscience to refresh him in all that Darkness, but a Light from the Evidence and Testimony of the best and most excellent Men, which will quickly controul and dispel all that Darkness, and those Clouds, and make his Integrity shine the more bright in the Eyes of the World. And if their Malice be yet stronger, and prevails so far as to deprive him of his Fortune, and to drive his Friends from him, and to drive him out of his Country, which is the darkest Calamity that can befall a just and an innocent Man; he hath still a Light about him that will conduct him in that Darkness, an innocent Chearfulness that will not leave him, when he leaves his Countrey, till it guides him back thither; and, in the mean time, God will dispose the Hearts of Strangers to that Humanity and Civility towards him, that he shall the less feel the Want of his Country. He had not so much trusted in his good Fortune and Estate, as to be over-afflicted with the Loss of it, and is therefore not surprized, because, though he looked not for it, he thought it might come: He hath transcribed the Philosopher's Advice into a true Christian Resolution: *Adversis non succumbere, letis non credere, omnem fortunæ licentiam in oculis habere, tanquam, quicquid potest facere, factura scit.* And above all, he knows it to be the peculiar Prerogative of Innocence and Virtue, that as it is never puffed up with Prosperity, so it bears Adversity with a Decency that guilty Men cannot arrive at; it breaks not out into uncomely Speeches, no, not towards those who delight in oppressing them; but grieves them with his Patience and Constancy, and with not feeling any Smart from their Insolence: The just Man is so far from being terrified with that, that he is the more confirmed; his Heart is established upon a Confidence that cannot deceive him, even the Promise and Engagement of God himself: And if we do behave our selves steadily in this Conflict, we may reasonably hope and expect that he will buoy us up from those Depths in which we have been sunk, and exalt us in the View of our Enemies, who out of Anguish and Pride to see our Restoration, shall undergo a more sensible Pain in the Prospect than any other Sufferings can bring upon them.

They

They take very wrong Measures, who from the ill Success which good Men frequently meet with in the Pursuits of this World, conclude either that Virtue itself is not to be engaged in those Emulations, or that virtuous Men are less skilful than others, who make more prosperous Voyages through those rough Seas. For the first, the severest Virtue cannot be more worthily exercised, than in those Provinces which most concern the Honour and Security of their Country, in the Service and Courts of Princes, where excellent Persons appear with greatest Lustre, and shed their Perfections to the general Example and Improvement of their Nation: And if in Regard of the Rankness of the Soil, Vices are more apt to grow there, than in other barren Climates, there is the most Need that Men of the best Endowments, and most regular Inclinations, inhabit and reside there, to over-shadow and overpower the other: And though frequently Men of the most sublime Parts, and unblemished Integrity, are exposed to Neglect and Contempt; and instead of being able to reform the Excesses of others, are themselves given up to Reproach, and sacrificed to the Pride and Malice of ill Men; if they preserve their Uprightness, they have not made a dishonourable Attempt, by not having succeeded according to their Wish; nor ought it to terrify others from the like Engagement: Though there are some Precipices which it may be even necessary to walk over, there are not always violent Gusts to blow them down, and to deprive them of their Footing; however, their Fall is more honourable than the Station of others, who have been supported by foul and unworthy Props.

O Lord, as Wealth, and Riches, and Greatness, and Power, are Blessings which thou dost frequently bestow upon those who love and praise thee as they ought to do, and are only permanent to those; when they who acquire those Advantages by their corrupt Lusts and Ambitions, do neither enjoy them with Delight whilst they continue, nor do they continue long: Give us Grace only to value those Benefits as they proceed from thy Bounty, and to part from them chearfully, when we cannot longer possess them with the same Innocence by which we first obtained them; and let us be troubled to be without Power, only because we are disabled from doing the good we desire to do. Amen.

P S A L M CXIII.

THE Heart of a pious and devout Man is always affected with the Contemplation of the wonderful Acts of Providence, and every Day finds new Matter and Argument to extol and magnify the Power and the Mercy of God; yet the most pious Heart may be more affected with some one Instance of his Goodness than with others, which have so much, or more of his Power in them. To see a great Man ascend from one Degree of Honour to another, till he comes to the full Height, is so usual, that we look upon it as a very natural Effect of Fortune; but when a poor, indigent, oppressed Man, a Man reduced to the utmost Extremity by the Tyranny of powerful and malicious Enemies,

mies, is lifted up to Honour and Preferment, and placed in the same Degree with, or above those who triumphed over him, it looks so like an Act of supernatural Creation, that it draws all Mens Eyes upon him, and the Beholders are most affected and delighted with it. It was the greatest Confirmation of the Faith of *Jethro*, *Moses's* Father-in-Law, to see the Children of *Israel* delivered from the Tyranny of *Pharaoh*:
** Now I know that the Lord is greater than all Gods, for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them.* Every proud Man makes a kind of War upon God Almighty, hath a Contention with him about Power, and therefore the snatching the Prey out of his Foot, and curing and healing all the Bruises the tyrannical Foot had made, is a Victory, and a Victory that raises the Spirits and Courage of all who are oppressed, as well as relieves the present Object of God's Bounty, and therefore the Joy in such a Case is Universal. We are so inquisitive into the Effects of Nature, and so much inclined to attribute the Blessings we receive to natural Causes; the Blessing of our Plenty to the natural Product of the fertile Soil whereof we are possessed, the Blessing of Children to the Fruitfulness of their Parents, and the Blessing of our Fortune as the natural Effect of our Industry, that we should quite forget the God of Nature, if he did not vouchsafe sometimes to cross, and thwart, and contradict the Course and Rules of Nature, that so we may see and remember, that the very Productions of Nature are from his Influence and Direction. If we will not impute the rich Harvest of a fruitful Soil to his Bounty, he will quickly make that fruitful Soil barren, and transplant the Fruitfulness to Places which abound in nothing but Barrenness, and that way convince us, how little the Inclination of Nature can contribute to our Benefit, but where he contributes his Blessing; so he frequently delights to make barren Women the joyful Mothers of Children, even the Mothers of the greatest Nations which ever sprung from one Womb, when the Stock of Nature that should contribute to it was exhausted and expired; and his redeeming the oppressed and contemned Person from the gulph of Destruction, and placing him above those who cast him thither, is amongst those Miracles which he works for the Confirmation of those who put their Trust in him, and for the Vindication of his own Omnipotence. And we may piously believe that they are intended likewise to encourage and stir up the Minds of Men to Industry, and a Contention with Nature, thereby to carry it towards nobler Attempts and Atchievements, than its own customary Force and Vigor will direct it. God is willing to be seconded by the Industry as well as Faith of those who truly depend upon him in his greatest Operations.

O Lord, the greatest Testimony we can give of our Humility in this World, in all the charitable Applications and Condescensions to the meanest of our Brethren, whom thou hast placed in a Condition inferior to what thou hast vouchsafed to confer on us, is not worthy to be named with that infinite and low Condescension of thine, in looking down upon us, and considering what we say or do: That from the Height of thy Kingdom, thou shouldest care to behold the greatest Kings and Princes of the Earth, is much a greater Humility

* Exod. xviii. 11.

Humility than any of them know how to practise; but that thou shouldest equally take Care, and provide for us miserable Sinners, and Subjects, with those Princes, is such a transcendent Act of Compassion, as could only be practised by the Father of that Son, who gave his Life for the equal Redemption of us all. Amen.

P S A L M CXIV, CXV.

THERE is no Question when God intends a universal Terror, or a universal Joy unto the World, he can as easily make every inanimate Part of the Creation to bear a Part in it, and manifest a Sense of it, as his rational Creature Man, for whose Amazement, Instruction and Delight, the Occasions of those different Affections are administered. When he would fright the World into a just Apprehension of his Displeasure and Wrath, he makes Heaven and Earth to tremble, and the whole Frame of Nature to shake; and when he is so well pleased as to expect a general Joy and Delight from all Men, upon some signal Blessing he confers upon them, he can make the Seas and the Rivers contribute to his Purposes, by their very natural and beneficial Motions, and the Hills to move as it were in Tunes and Dances, to express that Satisfaction and Joy which the Heart of Man can only entertain and understand. The only Wonder is, that all these inferior Works of the Creation, the Earth, the Sea, the Hills, and the Mountains, should have a greater Sense of God's Anger, or his Favours, than Man, who can only be the better and the worse for those Demonstrations. That they who underwent such severe Mortifications, such sharp Chastisements, such devouring Calamities, as disordered all the Elements; should be the only insensible Creatures from what Hand all this fell upon them. That all Things unconcerned in the Bounty, and in the Deliverances, should find a way to express and magnify the Goodness and the Mercy of God to Mankind; and that Mankind alone should be so brutish, as not be sensible of these Blessings, and to murmur and undervalue them, even in the Time they are preserved by them: That he should vouchsafe to make so great and particular Promises, and perform all those Promises, to a People whose Hearts he had not prepared to be worthy of those Promises, or sensible of the Performance of them; that he should lead and conduct a People to the Conquest of mighty Nations, more numerous and powerful than themselves; that he should subdue them in such a Manner, and by such Ways and Means, as made it manifest to them that their own Hands, and their own Arms, had least to do in the Victory, and then give the entire Dominion of their fruitful and pleasant Lands into their Possession: That after all this, and much more, this ingrateful People should so totally forget this merciful God, as to pay their Devotions to the Gods whom they had conquered; to acknowledge the Obligations they had received from his divine Providence, as the Effects of another Power; and that they should worship those very Idols which could not hinder those from being destroyed who had erected them, and constantly paid their Worship to them; is a Miracle

too great to be wrought by any other Power, than the Malice of the Heart of Man; and is equal to most of God's own, but that of his sparing them, and not rooting them out, and extirpating them from the Face of the Earth, in their first Enterprize of Ingratitude.

As God from the very first Creation of the World, was most jealous of the Sin of Idolatry, and that the Wit and Invention of Man was like to create a Divinity to himself, and to make Gods who had nothing to do in making him: So he no sooner made Choice of a People for his own Service, than he took all possible Care that they should never fall into that odious Transgression, and in that very Care manifested still his Jealousy that they would be inclined to it. Therefore, and to render them the more unexcusable, he gave them a Transcript of the Wonders he had wrought for them: He gave severe Charge for the utter Destruction of the Nations, whose Lands he gave into their Possession, and for the total demolishing of their Altars and high Places, that there might remain no body to tempt them to any other Religion than what he had prescribed; nor any Form or Example which might seduce them to any Curiosity of Enquiry; leaving it almost as impossible for them to imagine, or devise a new Deity, as to forget the mighty Arm, that in the Sight of their own Eyes had rescued them from their Slavery in *Egypt*, made them walk through the Depth of the Sea, fed them in the Wilderness, and driven a mightier People out of their Territories, that they might enjoy it. Yet all this Care would not serve the Turn; nor was there any Thing so fixed in the Heart, as to hinder the Operation of the Brain; they would devise a Religion for themselves, rather than have any to be prescribed to them; and got Means to be so well informed of the Practice of the former Inhabitants, that they fell to the Exercise of the same Idolatry for which others had been destroyed, that their Religion might perish with them. They were worthy of some Excuse, at least of some Compassion, who not being able to comprehend what Divinity it was that created and governed the World, chose to worship the Sun, which they saw to be so excellent a Creature, and that it had the greatest Influence upon all other Creatures that they could possibly imagine; but when their Understandings grew so gross, as to adore a Stock, or a Stone, an Image which they saw wrought and formed to a Likeness by the Hand of an Artificer, who though he could give Likeness, could not infuse Life or Motion; and that they were so sottish as to ask Counsel, and offer Sacrifice to those senseless Idols; what Punishment remained fit for them, but to transform such Men into Beasts, who had Beasts fit to govern them? Yet could not this absurd and ridiculous Contagion be rooted out of the Heart of Man, till God was compelled to regenerate the World, by sending his only Son into it, and to plant such a Faith and Religion as should be no more capable of such a Pollution; and to cure his Jealousy of future Idolatry, by making it inconsistent and impossible to be a Christian and an Idolater.

We may flatter our selves, and we do but flatter our selves, in imagining that we are much better; that how negligent soever we are in a punctual and precise Obedience to God's Commandment, we are not in such Rebellion against him, do not wage a War against his Divinity, as that unthankful People did, upon whom he had poured out his Blessings in such Abundance: We do still remember and acknowledge his Loving-

Kindness, and never pay the Tribute of our Thanks to any other Power but his. It were to be wished it were so, for it is some Degree of Good to be better than the worst: But alas, our Condition is contrary, our Obligations are as great, our Deliverances even as signal, our Chastisements have been much less severe, and our Punishments not so sharp, and of a much shorter Continuance than theirs were, and our Ingratitude as notorious and unpardonable. There might be amongst them some Persons who murmured in the greatest Plenty, and neglected and undervalued his Benefits in the Article of Time in which they received them: And we have enough of those who imitate them to the Life in all those infamous Repinings: Yet the Body of the People continued entire in their Devotions towards him, whilst any of that Generation remained which had Knowledge of his Laws, or were Witnesses to any of his Miracles: They never turned to new Gods till all the Marks and Tokens of the old ones were worn out of their Memory: The Magistrates neglected their Duty, and omitted to inform the People what they were to do, before the People were corrupted, and fell from their heavenly Father. It is very true, that they had a Transcript of the Law, an exact Prescription of all they were to do, and of all they were not to do: Yet it is as true, that this precious Record was lost, or taken from them, or mislaid; so that in some hundred of Years they were neither informed of what God had done for them, or what he expected they should do for him; and in this forlorn Stupidity, (what could be expected, but that they betake themselves to the Worship of those Gods, who were worshipped by those to whom they were Servants; and who for ought they knew had delivered them into their Hands) that was their Blindness and Misfortune. Ours is, that we are the very Persons, the same Men whom he hath redeemed out of the Jaws of Death, out of Banishment, out of Bondage, from the greatest Oppression, and the highest Servitude: We need no History to tell us what God hath done for us, and by what wonderful Means he hath restored us, because it is not in our Power to forget it: We do all we can, not to think of it, at least that we may not think of him who did it, which is a more perverse and sublime Piece of Ingratitude than we know that that People were guilty of; and that we may not be too far behind them in their most enormous Crime of Idolatry, in which we know not how literally to imitate them, we come as near as we can, to make Idols of our selves, by worshipping and magnifying our own Inventions, our own Wisdom, and our own Dexterity, to which we impute all that God hath done for us by the Brightness of his own Power, and the shining Strength of his own Arm.

Merciful Father, awaken us out of the deep Lethargy we are in, and make us remember the State and Condition we were in some few Years past, when all our Hopes had left us, and the Greatest of Men appeared but as Idols, who had Hands but could not help us, and though they had Eyes could not see or direct us: Make us remember, and never suffer us to forget what thou didst then do for us, and what Vows we then made to thee, if thou wouldst redeem us from our miserable Condition: O, do not heap these Blessings upon us for our Confusion, and that thou mayst make us yet more miserable for our odious Ingratitude. Amen.

P S A L M

P S A L M CXVI.

IF we have not a greater Frowardness and Perverseness towards God than we are taken Notice to have towards any of his Creatures, we must unavoidably esteem and love him above all the World, by those very Benefits and Obligations by which we are induced to make Friendships and Application amongst Men: It is a Brutality not to be grateful to those who assist and protect us; and we seldom fail in Application of our selves to those whom we have found ready to oblige us; whosoever is inclined to do us good shall be sure to be troubled enough with our Addresses. This being so known a Truth, how ought our Faces to be covered with Shame, that we break all these Rules, manifest all this Ingratitude towards God, and towards him alone; that he only who is so willing to hear us, that he inclines his Ear unto us, invites us to pour out our Supplications unto him, should be without our Affection, without our Confidence, without our Dependance; that the favourable Countenance of every great Man should draw us to him, draw us after him, make us rely upon his Promises, and patiently attend his Performance, which is not in his Power to make good, and it may be not in his Will if he could; and that all the Indulgence of God Almighty, all his Condescensions in hearing us, and all his Bounty in conferring what we ask of him, cannot persuade us to rely and depend upon him, or dispose us to be as willing to ask, as he is to grant. It may be when the Pains, and even the Pangs of Death encompass us, and some dismal Apprehensions of what is to befall us after, which before we would not think of, have broke in upon us; we may rather out of Impatience cast out, than out of Devotion breathe out some short Ejaculations to Heaven; and if a tender Compassion for us there, snatches us out of that Danger, and restores us to Health again, we never think of the Author of our Preservation, until we find our selves in the same Exigent again: For which barbarous Negligence and Incogitancy, there is no imaginable Reason, but the easiness and Propensity we find in God to hear and relieve us, when with great Men there is so much Labour, and Diligence, and Importunity requisite, before we obtain what we long desire from them, which makes a deeper Impression upon our Memory. Though a worse Reason cannot be found for this incredible Inadvertency and Stupidity, a better will hardly be given; and let us never be so much ashamed of this, we must be branded with it for want of another. If it were otherwise, the daily Experience we have of his Goodness and Protection, his constant Inclination to, and frequent Deliverance of us, would be attended with another Kind of Affection and Confidence towards him: The many Preservations he hath vouchsafed to us, the often raising our Spirits when we have been dejected even to Despair, the supporting us when we have not been able to stand against the Malice of our Enemies, would have put our Soul at rest, and made that Impression upon us, and produced such an Acquiescence in him, that nothing could befall us, which we are not prepared to suffer; since nothing can befall us that is harder to bear than that was, from which he hath at some Time or another not already delivered us. There remains therefore nothing on our Part to be done, but

but chearfully to take that Cup which he hath assigned us to drink of, to pay our Vows unto him in publick Acknowledgment of all his Blessings, and all his Promises; and he will so temper that Cup, that it shall be no unpleasant Draught to us, and amply perform all those Promises, to which we can make the least Title or Pretence that they belong to us.

O Lord, we are thy Servants, and the Children of thy Servants; our Fathers did put their Trust in thee; thou hast preserved us from our Cradles, from Sicknes, and Oppression, and all manner of Dangers to this Hour; and hast been inclined to grant any Thing we have known how to desire from thee; thou hast been more ready to grant than we to ask: O let not this thy Goodness be diverted by our Ignorance and Unworthiness, or our Want of Diligence in asking. Give, we beseech thee, when we do not ask, and think upon us when we do not think upon thee, until thou hast so far convinced and reformed us by that Fatherly Kindness, that we can think of nothing but thee, and how we may please thee, and become acceptable to thee. Amen.

P S A L M CXVII.

IT seems a great Restraint that God put upon himself, a lessening of his Glory, and a Kind of Confinement of his Omnipotence, when, of all Mankind that covered the Face of the Earth, he communicated himself but to one poor Nation, and left all the World besides without any Title or Pretence to Salvation, by not prescribing to them the Way and Means to attain to it. It is very true, he did not vouchsafe to make himself so manifestly known to any other People: He did not condescend to hold Conferences, to make Promises and Contracts, to enter into Covenants and Conditions with any, before he enter'd into that Familiarity with *Abraham*, and which he so often afterwards renewed to *Isaac*, and to *Jacob*, and their Generations; to whom he gave such ample and particular Instructions in writing how they were to serve and please him, that it is amongst the greatest Wonders that any one of them ever swerved foully from his Obedience: But this extraordinary Grace and Favour to *Abraham* and his Progeny, is no convincing Evidence that he left the other Part of the World in an absolute Incapacity of Salvation, or in a more desperate Condition than *Abraham* himself was in before God made that Promise to him; which we have no Reason to believe was desperate, and that God would make Choice of a Man to make Father of the Faithful, in whose Heart he had not discovered such a Fear and Love of his Divine Majesty, as would have been sufficient to have brought him to a Place of Bliss: We know well that *Noah* was a very righteous Person, and much in God's Favour: Nor have we Cause to believe that he did not very well instruct his Sons in their Duty, or that they did not observe his Instructions for some Generations: So that it seems great Pity that

we should be obliged to think that from the Flood to *Abraham's* Time there should be no Remnant of the World in a State to be saved, or that the Promise made to *Abraham*, excluded all others from Salvation but the Children of *Israel*: How far it was from serving their Turn we all know, and may piously hope that all other Nations were not reprobated, and that good and bad Men, Men who loved and practised his Virtue, were thrown into the same Abyss with those who did neither. And as those clear, plain, and uncontroverted Directions could not keep that chosen People from desperately forfeiting all the Promises which had been made to them; so the not communicating those gracious Instructions to the other Parts of the World, did not deprive the rest of that Divine Light of Nature that was in their Souls, and which disposed them to such a Reverence of a Divinity which they could not comprehend, as might make them acceptable by their Fruit to him who without their own Privity had given them Grace to please him. This charitable Hope and Presumption will not in any Degree lessen our highest Value of the inestimable Benefit of the removing all those Obstructions and Distinctions by our Saviour's Coming into the World, and admitting all Mankind to the same Title and Right to Heaven, and under much easier Conditions, at least with much plainer Instructions to know the Way thither, than was contained in the *Levitical* Law, and the Prescriptions which the *Jews* were punctually to observe. We cannot magnify that Bounty too much, or too carefully decline and avoid all Opinions and Imaginations which would raise again those Limitations and Confinements of God's Mercies, which his Fatherly Goodness and Bounty hath so evidently removed and enlarged.

Merciful God, since thou hast out of thy unspeakable Mercy vouchsafed to abolish that Distinction of Jew and Gentile by making thy self equally knowing to both, and granting the same Privileges and Instructions to both, how they may serve and please thee with equal Acceptation: Give us we beseech thee Grace to be equally charitable to all who profess to have their whole Faith in thee, and their whole Dependance upon thee, and heartily desire to please thee; and not to take upon us to condemn them on thy Behalf, because they do not believe every Thing that we have been taught to believe. Amen.

P S A L M CXVIII.

WE do very often excuse our selves for doing somewhat we ought not to do, for taking weak and improbable ways to compass some End that we propose to our selves, that we knew not what else to do; that we had tried all other Means without Success, and therefore resorted to this, as what might prove effectual, when it may be there were in View many more probable. Methinks we should with much more Reason, because upon very uncontrollable Experience, infinitely undervalue both the Things and the Persons of this World, in order to any Dependence upon them for Comfort and Happiness, and put our sole Confidence in God, and rely upon his good Pleasure in all our Hopes, and all our Fears, because we know not what else to do; we have tried all other ways to no Purpose, and therefore it is Time to fix our selves upon that which never did, never can deceive or disappoint us. All the Things of this World are vain and empty, and fantastical Appearances of somewhat which they are not; and the Persons of this World are as unsubstantial to be relied upon as the other Representations, both cozen and delude us alike. It is a pleasant Argument that the Stoick Philosopher makes against the Lusts and Delights of Men, which will become the best Christian to reflect upon; Either those Things are not good which we take to be so, and set our Hearts upon, or Man is much happier than God himself, who is without all those; *Non enim libido ad illum nec epularum lautitia, &c. ergo aut (quod incredibile est) bona Deo defunt, aut hoc ipsum argumentum est, bona non esse, quæ Deo defunt.* If Honour and Riches, and the other Pleasures of this World were real and substantial Happiness, we should enjoy them in Heaven, where there is want of nothing that is good; and it is a sure Argument that they are not valuable, because God himself is without them. Indeed a Man had need to be born but Yesterday, who sets his Heart upon the Pleasure, or Pomp, or Greatness of this World, when every Day supplies him with Experience and Observations enough of Men of great Wealth, who by some Casualty which could not be prevented, or by some Power that could not be resisted, are upon a sudden become Beggars; of Men in great Place and Authority, who by the Frown of a Prince, or the Malice and Conspiracy of Enemies, are thrown out, and exposed to Contempt and Misery; and of Princes themselves, who are deprived of their Dominions, and driven into other Countries to seek their Bread and Subsistence, by the Strength and Power of other Princes, or the Rebellion of their own Subjects: And if there were none of these ordinary Accidents, a Fever, or any other Disease, in a Moment, and every Minute may be that Moment, snatches our Lives from us, and all our dear Delights are vanished. These continual Vicissitudes in Nature and Fortune, cannot but dispose and oblige us to have a very mean Esteem of all mortal Objects, and to raise our Thoughts to a Contemplation of what may be worthier to possess them.

I

But

But since it is very difficult, if not impossible, whilst we are in this World, totally to restrain our Affections from it; nor ought the Benefits of this World, Health, Peace and Plenty, to be otherwise undervalued, than that they may not engross all our Inclinations, and alienate and divert us from what is more worthy, and more durable; though we are to be content with Poverty, and with Sickness, as that which God thinks fit for us, we are not forbid to prefer Health and Plenty before either, it is enough if we do not murmur to part with them, though we would be glad to keep them: In order therefore to the obtaining that Wealth, and the Honour and Preferment which we may lawfully possess, and innocently desire, we shall find, that putting our firm and entire Confidence in God, and submitting to, and depending upon his good Pleasure, is a more expedite way, than relying and putting our Trust in any Man whatsoever, even in Kings or Princes, who if they have corrupt Affections, or perverse Ends themselves, do not desire to have inquisitive and strict Men to survey their Actions; and they who depend upon them must take such Ways, and make such Applications, as will be acceptable to them: Whereas he who puts his entire and only Confidence in God, is sure to do nothing that may displease him, and leaves nothing undone that may make him fit and worthy of what he pretends to; he applies himself to Men as much as is requisite, but trusts only in God, and knows well that he will dispose the Hearts of Princes as he thinks fit; and that if they are gracious to him, that the Motion is from above. He that puts his Trust in Men, how great and good soever, hopes and fears upon every Change of their Countenance; and though he obtains what he desires, is still in Apprehension of losing it again; the Humours and Affection of Men are very changeable, and Princes themselves are inconstant: But he who puts his Trust in God, and God only, knows not what Fear is, because he knows that will fall out that is unquestionably best for him, and doth always believe that to be best which doth fall out; he hath no fear of losing what he hath, but looks upon what he enjoys as an Inheritance, because it proceeds from a Kindness and a Bounty that cannot be exhausted: No Conspiracy or Multitude can terrify him, because he is supported by a Strength and Power that can easily destroy them. As the Favours and Kindness which we receive from God Almighty, are much more valuable and beneficial to us than those we can receive from Men, how liberal soever, so the Disfavours and Correction we receive from him are less grievous, and more merciful than those we undergo by the Passion and Prejudice of Men. The Displeasure of great Men and Princes is violent, and without Measure, and is never determined, but in the Destruction of the Persons against whom they are incensed, seldom then, but exercises the same Bitterness against their Memory, against their Posterity; Charity and Forgiveness are held childish Affections, and to pardon an Injury inconsistent with the Rules of Policy; he that can rise again is not low enough; and we have no other Measure in Revenge, than our not being able to inflict more. No Man better knew the ill Nature of Man than *David* did, and therefore he chose to undergo the most terrible Wrath of God, than to be subject to the Fury of his merciless Enemy, though limited to a short Time; well knowing that it would be executed with the utmost Rigor, to the very last Minute of that Time: But the

Cha-

Chastisements which are inflicted upon us from God, though they may be sometimes very severe, according to the Provocations we give him; yet in respect of those Provocations, and compared to them; are very gentle; they are rather Physick and Medicines, than Correction and Punishment; and are never very grievous, but when they meet with a Disease so stubborn and obstinate, that it will not be wrought upon, and corrected, without being tormented; they may be very sore, but they do not give us over unto Death, and they heal all the Sores they have made, and raise the Spirits which they have dejected. The Truth is, there can be no Agony, no great Bitterness in any Affliction, if the Confidence be rightly fixed upon God; and indeed it is a very unsettled Confidence, far from being fixed, if we do not acquiesce in it. If it hath befallen us unjustly, it can scarce be felt, since Guilt can only make Adversity insupportable; and a Man ought to be no more troubled, than one that is a Prisoner in a besieged Town, which will be forced within a Day to give it self up into the Hands of his Captain. If we have drawn it upon our selves by our Fault or our Folly, and have made an Atonement by our Acknowledgment and Repentance, without which there can be no Confidence fixed upon God, the Pain is over, and we are in no worse Condition than he who is in Prison upon Execution for Debt, and sees his Security come into the House with Money to pay the Debt, upon which he is to be at Liberty.

O Lord God, we have had Experience enough of the Vanity and Folly of this World, of the Unsteadiness and Transitoriness of all Things in it, and of the Infidelity and Falshood of Men who inhabit it, how unfit they are to be trusted and relied upon; and we have had Experience of thy Favour and Loving-kindness; and that thou art so far from not protecting and preserving those who put their Trust in thee, that thou hast preserved many who never had the Confidence to repose any Trust in thee. O let us never consider any Thing of this Life, but as it is prepared, and blessed, and given unto us by thee; nor repose any Trust and Confidence in any Man, for the attaining any Thing that may make us happy; but only rely and depend upon thee, and esteem that Condition best, which thou thinkest best to place us in, or expose us to, and to feel a more sensible Delight in obeying thee, than in the highest Place thou canst exalt us to. Amen.

2

P S A L M CXIX.

(j.)

THERE cannot be a clearer Evidence and Manifestation of a just and happy Government, than that all Persons who live under it, do know what is their own, and the Penalty of doing Wrong to each other; and when the Rules are so equal, that all are equally punished who violate them; *misera servitus ubi jus est vagum, & incognitum*; Men are in a State of Servitude, who do not understand the Laws which they are to obey; and when some Men may securely do that which others are punished for doing. It is the merciful Justice of God Almighty, that he hath prescribed us so plain a Law to walk by, that we cannot swerve from it without affected Guilt, and without some Check of our own Conscience; and no Man ever broke this Law but by his own Choice, and therefore he cannot complain of the Punishment that attends it; if he may be happy by observing it, he deserves to be miserable for contemning it. When we have a Reward in our View for doing our Duty, which we ought to do without any Reward, and have the same View of the Penalty we are to incur if we perform it not, what Chastisement can be too severe for preferring the last before the first? Nor can we pretend that this Law is so difficult, that we know not how to observe it, that it requires such a Composure and Rectitude of Mind, such a total Dominion over all our unruly Appetites and Affections, that we cannot attain to such a Perfection; when he hath so fully instructed us in the Method we are to pursue, and the Degrees by which we may be sure to practise this entire Obedience. He hath vouchsafed to let us know what we are not to do, and our Obedience to that very Negative will be a good Advance to the other; and let the Ascent be never so steep, we may easily decline going backward. It will always be in our Power, if it be not in our Will, to avoid the doing that which he expressly forbids us to do; and this not doing, will be an excellent Preparative towards the doing all that he expects, the active Part will be near as easy; he who takes Pains to please him, endeavours with his whole Heart to do his Duty, hath done it; and surely he who doth not heartily endeavour, hath no Mind to do it: But the Heart must be entire in this Endeavour, the whole Heart must be engaged in it; if it be divided, and would keep the Law in Part, observe the Duty in some Seasons, and be excused from the Penalty for less Wariness at other Times; there is no Blessing for this half-heartedness, the Heart must be undefiled, and if it sincerely endeavours to be so, it will be so. Let us not flatter our selves with any hope of Excuse from our own Disability and Weakness, that we are not able to observe his Commandments, or to keep his Precepts, that our Frailties are so predominant that we have not Strength to resist them, and so think to justify our most impudent Transgressions, by a modest Accusation of our own Defects, and our Incapacity of doing what he requires

at our Hands, which is no less than accusing him of the highest Severity and Injustice: We may find if we will seek, and if we do not find, it is because we will not seek. He directs those who are in the Way, that they shall be sure not to go out of it; and they who truly desire to keep his Statutes shall never be without Directions how to do it. God never forsakes us till we forsake him; and a Confidence in our selves that we can observe his Commandments, is not inconsistent with an entire Confidence in him that he will enable us to do it; nor is it so probable that he will assist those in any Enterprize, who utterly despair of being able to go through with it.

GOOD God, who dost expect that all who call to thee for Help, shall do all they can to help themselves, and would'st have no Man so much rely on thee, as totally to neglect his own Preservation or Recovery; thou hast commanded us to keep thy Testimonies, create a Confidence in us that we can do it, and assist us with thy Grace, that we may heartily labour and endeavour so to do: Make us so perfectly to abhor all Things which are unacceptable to thee, or to do any Thing which thou hast forbidden us to do, that no Temptation of Pleasure or Profit may corrupt us. Infuse into our Hearts a true Desire to please thee, and a true Endeavour to do all that thou dost expect from us, and then graciously accept that our Desire and Endeavour, for a full Observation and Performance of that which thou hast commanded: O forsake us not, and direct us, and we will keep thy Statutes. Amen.

(ij.)

PRecipitation and Inadvertency are the chief Causes of Mens being disappointed in any Thing they go about; considerate and wary Men seldom miscarry; and they who will not consider what they do, are worthy to miscarry in what they go about: How common soever, it is a stupid and irrational Excuse that Men frequently make for doing what they ought not to do, that they did not think of it; as if the not exercising that Faculty which upon the Matter distinguishes us from Beasts, could be a Mitigation of any Guilt we are involved in. Memory, which is nothing but thinking and Reflection, is the natural Result of a rational Soul, and the precious Preservative which God hath given to Mankind against the Torrent of our Appetites, which for want only thereof governs the brutish Creatures; and we think our selves worthy of Pardon, or of Pity, for not remembering and thinking of what we should have done; and since we cannot pretend to be ignorant, not to know our Duty, we affect to forget it, that we may not be charged with the Breach of it, which is the highest Aggravation of our Fault, and will probably be of our Punishment: He that would lessen his Offence by his want of Memory, had need make it manifest that he forgot at the same time to eat, or sleep, or to do somewhat his strongest Inclinations tempted him

him to do; it being against all Reason that he should remember to do all that pleased him, and only forget to do that which God expected from him. To what Purpose hath God made his Commandments known to us, taken the Pains to make them understood by us, if our withdrawing our Eyes from beholding them, or our Heart from considering them, may render us excusable for not yielding Obedience to them? The real Deprivation of our Understanding, when it proceeded from our own Vice, never lessened any Crime which we commit in that Defect; as no Man is less guilty of Murther, because he was drunk when he committed it. After all this, let the Excuse be never so sorry a one, it is the best we can make for the greatest Ingratitude, and the greatest Impiety we daily commit against God Almighty, that we did not think what we did, we did not remember that it was somewhat he forbid us to do, nor did remember to do that which he enjoined us: His Mercy hath put us in a Way plain and easy enough for us to walk in, and hath given us Light enough to conduct us in it; but our own Perverseness, which we call Incogitancy, hath made us wander into Darkness that covers us, until we are ashamed and afraid of that Light we left, and love the Darkness our Guilt hath led us into; wandering is our Delight, and we would be thought weak when we are only wilful: If our Heart had but sought after Truth, we could never have wandered out of the Way that leads to it. *A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps,* * says Solomon. When the Heart is solicitous to devise, and find out, and discover, God is at hand with his Direction, and supplies all that is wanting: A Heart that thinks of God will find Lips that shall speak of him, and delight more in thinking of his Mercy, and how to please him, than in all the Joys of this World; there is no Possibility of forgetting what he commands, whilst the Heart retains any Enquiry. The Stupidity of the Heart alone is the Cause of all desperate Incogitance.

GRacious God, who dost still vouchsafe to think of us, though we do not think of thee, and to prescribe us a Way to come unto thee, though we do even affect to wander out of that Way; for thy Mercy sake, and that it may not be lost upon a wicked, stubborn, and incorrigible Nation, we beseech thee to reform this wandring Spirit in us, and imprint and fix in our Hearts such a Love, and Fear, and Reverence of thee, that we may never forget what thou hast done for us, and consequently what thou dost expect from us: Let us be ashamed not to think of thee, which is to offend thee; and convince us, that not to take heed of what thou commandest, is the same as to repose no Faith in thee: From which odious Apostacy, good Lord deliver and preserve us for thy Son's sake. Amen.

* Prov. xvi. 9.

(iij.)

N*Unquam gloriosa res esset gratum esse*, says the Philosopher: It would not be an honourable and a glorious Thing to be grateful, if it were not safe to be ungrateful, if there was any Law to punish Ingratitude; nor would Virtue and Religion have any notable Merit, if the Pursuit of it were so easy that it met with no Obstructions or Discouragements, if there were not great Temptations in the Way to divert them from it, and some of such a Nature as may startle or amuse a Mind not wholly irresolute. There is no doubt, but that as Religion yields great Refreshment, and solid Comfort to the well informed, and well disposed Mind, so the Advance and Progress towards it, and the Exercise of it, is not without very great Contention of Spirit against many alluring, and many powerful Diversions; so that the Victory had need be crowned with signal Benefit and Advantage, to inflame Mens Hearts to conquer and subdue those Enemies which offer so good Quarter and convenient Conditions. There is Treachery enough within our own Breasts, and Opposition and Discouragement more than enough without, to pervert and alienate us from that severe Affection to, and Practice of Religion and Piety, if there be not somewhat within us too to support and carry us through all those false and plausible Suggestions. Of all the inward Corruptions which struggle and wrestle within to debauch and avert us from the Love of Sincerity and Religion, there is none so sturdy and well armed, as the Enemy we commonly cherish most, because we suspect least, which is Pride, that seems to lie quiet, and to take up less Room than those furious and raging Passions of our Blood, our Anger and Revenge, our Lust and Intemperance, which so frequently are Tyrants over us: Yet those vehement Transports are not such barefaced Enemies, do not so eradicate and pull up Religion by the Roots, as Pride does; that makes the Soil barren, and will not suffer the least Seed of Piety to grow up in our Hearts: Humility being the most essential Ingredient into Religion and the Love of God, to be a proud Man and religious must be a Contradiction. God himself must first rebuke the proud Man, humble and mortify his Heart into another Form, before he can think of being religious: There are two great Discouragements without, which do always disturb and interrupt, too often destroy our Application and Zeal to a virtuous Life, and the Obligations of Piety. The first, a General Contempt and Derision of it: The second, the Practice of Princes and very great Persons of License and Vice; and he that can make Head against both these, deserves the Reputation and Character of a very good Christian. The greatest Danger from the first is, lest by the unavoidable constant bearing the bitter Scorn and Contempt of good, and pious, and upright Men, and the scurrilous Jest, and profane Wit, which are too frequently uttered and published against Sobriety and Integrity of Manners, do first so far reconcile the Standers-by, that they think them good Company, and then that they like the Wit so well, that they think what they

see so generally laughed at, not so valuable a Thing as they thought it before: A universal Combination against any one Virtue will put it shrewdly out of Countenance. The other, the licentious Practice of Princes and great Men, is indeed a destroying Contagion; all Men fall down before them, and think it their Duty to imitate them; whilst Modesty and Uprightness is driven into Caves and Corners, and hath nothing to do but to implore the Divine Power to cure and expel the deadly Poison in the Fountain, which cannot but infect and corrupt the Streams; when there seems no other Way to observe God's Commandment, in not thinking evil of Kings in our Hearts, than by being at a Distance from them, that our Eyes may not see the Evil that they do: They who so far master themselves, as not to be mastered by these Temptations and Discouragements, and can keep their Hearts entire, and fixed to a true Devotion and Obedience to all that God hath commanded, are most like to prevail with God by their Prayers to remove all inward Impediments out of the Hearts of other Men, and to suppress and correct those outward Interruptions and Discountenances, that there may be Contention amongst all Men who shall be most delighted in his Commandments.

O Lord, open our Eyes that we may have a clear and uninterrupted Sight of all the wonderful Things which thou hast done for us: Let us not live as if we were Strangers to thy Commandments, and know not what is our Duty to thee. Infuse into our Hearts such an Awe and Fear to displease thee, that no Allurements and Invitations of the false Pleasures of the World, may seduce us from our Obedience to thee, no Scoffs and Reproaches of wicked and profane Persons may lessen our Reverence to any Thing which thou hast commanded us to do, and that no Example of what Persons soever may lead us to do any Thing that may divert or lessen thy Fatherly Kindness towards us. Amen.

(iv.)

WE are too near a-kin to this World not to be delighted with it, and with many Things in it, which both hinder our Prospect of, and retards our Progress to a better: The Earth is too much our Composition to be despised by us, and not to interpose it self between us, and those Divine and Heavenly Speculations which would withdraw us from all Kind of Esteem of it: And there are so many Disguises and false Colours put upon many Things to make us in love with them, that it is no wonder if we are often deceived, and prefer a specious Appearance of Good, before the most solid Truth, that leads to true Happiness: For though Truth is in its native Perfection very beautiful and lovely, yet it sits not always in the best Light, and admits, or is confined within Restraints and Shadows that disfigure it, or abate much of its Lustre; it is all our Business to find it out, and too much of our Business to miss, and get out of the Way to it. There are very few Men so unreasonable, at least that own the being so, as to desire to live without any Law, not to be
liable

liable or accountable to any manner of Government; since their next Neighbour, possessed of the same Liberty and Privilege, could not but be very grievous to them; and if they must be subject to a Law, they cannot imagine an easier or a juster than that which God hath prescribed to them; nor is their Obedience to any other Law so liberally rewarded, or rewarded at all. He who most exactly obeys all the Laws of his Country, hath indeed Security by it, no Reward for it; it is God only gratifies and rewards, bountifully rewards us for doing but our Duty, for obeying his Commands, which we cannot without Wickedness violate; and yet we do with more Industry and Wariness conform our selves to a Submission and Observation of human Laws, than of divine; though neither the Letter, or the Reason of the one, is better understood by us, than the other. Small Penalties and Damages terrify us from ordinary Trespasses, when greater and unavoidable Penalties cannot restrain us from committing fouler Trespasses, which nothing could produce but our having more Reverence and Affection for Man than for God, and a more stupid preferring the Salvation of this World, before the only Salvation in the next. It cannot be too seriously considered and abhorred, how many Men there are, who scarce break a Law of the King's in their Lives, yet break the Laws of God every Day without Scruple or Remorse; when he hath as much suppressed and mastered the Corruption of his Heart, and the Malignity of his Nature in complying with the one, as would serve the Turn in making him obedient to the other: For an angry and a covetous Man hath as uneasy and unpleasant a Conflict with himself, when he forbears his Revenge, and declines an Opportunity to oppress, for fear of the Law and the Magistrates, as he hath who subdues and masters his Lust and his Ambition for the Love of God, and Conscience of his Religion; and if he wisely considered it, and thereby begun at the right End, he might do both Works, and infinitely improve the Benefit with the same Labour. Human Laws may, to a very good Degree, be punctually observed by the same Person who as positively breaks all God's Commandments, and then the Benefit and Security in the other is quite lost: Whereas, if he begins and sets his Heart and Thoughts upon God, studies his Laws, and walks in the ways prescribed by him, he is sure never to tread out of the Path of Obedience to his Prince, and will out of his Conscience and Devotion to Heaven, perform all the Obligations he owes to his Country, and his own Security; which will be so much the better provided for, by how much his Caution and Circumspection hath a nobler Birth, that is born from Love and Charity, than that which only proceeds from Fear.

GOOD God, we humbly desire thee to purge and cleanse our Souls from those earthly Affections and Desires which hinder them from mounting up to Heaven, in a continual celebrating and magnifying thy great Blessings and Mercy, and in a devout Contemplation of, and Obedience to thy Statutes and thy Ordinances; make us clearly discern, that by observing what thou commandest, we shall be directed and enabled to perform our Duty to all earthly Power, and to provide for our Quiet and Security here; and that no other Obedience without that to thee, can avail us any Thing: Enlarge the Thoughts and Conceptions of our Hearts, that nothing may be fixed and lodged there,

there, but the Love and Admiration of thy heavenly Purity and Providence. Amen.

(v.)

WE are all God's Children, and, God help us, very Children, in the Knowledge of him; and therefore he doth not expect that we should find the way out our selves to please him; it is very well, if being first put into it, and directed how we shall walk, we observe it afterwards, as Children can very well do, and are not apt to straggle out of the way. The greatest Understanding, and sharpest Faculties, are not sufficient to discover what the Extent of God's Expectation is from us, or to find out the way to satisfy or comply with that Expectation; they who endeavour with what Wit or Industry soever, to find out a Religion for themselves, are commonly pleased with one of their own making, which is far from being that with which God is well-pleased; and every Error in Religion, every Step out of the right way, especially when our own Curiosity and Presumption hath led us out, involves us in Intricacies and Affectations, from whence we are with great Difficulty reduced into the right Path. But God hath been so gracious to us to prevent this Wandering, except we are violently carried to it by our own Perverseness and Obstinacy, by so full a Declaration of what will please him, and what will displease him; what the Law is that we are to observe, and how we may be sure to observe it; that it is pure want of Understanding, a gross want of Wit, if we do not perform, that is, heartily endeavour to perform what he doth expect from us; if our Heart be steadfastly disposed to it, he will not suffer us to be disappointed. Religion hath not Two greater Enemies than Covetousness and Vanity, because they both work upon the Heart; and the Heart once corrupted, corrupts all Religion, and makes it serve worldly and sensual Interests. It is impossible for the Heart of a covetous Man to be inclined to Religion, because it is inclined to, and prefers that which is most contrary to it, to Religion. Piety cannot possess that Heart which is possessed by Covetousness, no Heart is large enough to entertain both; not that Wealth and Religion cannot dwell in one House together, or that a Rich Man may not be very pious: Riches doth not beget Covetousness, though Covetousness usually begets Riches: A pious Man knows how to use the Wealth that God hath given him, and looks upon it as given to him to give to others, and so distributes it in Works of Charity, and in relieving those who want it: A covetous Man either uses not his Wealth at all, for fear of losing it, or uses it to evil Purposes; and so he may increase it, cares not how he uses it; and doth not look upon it as given to him, but as gotten by him, and considers giving as the greatest Contradiction to getting, upon which his whole Heart is fixed. The good and religious Man enjoys his Plenty, and likes it well enough, but is not disaffected to Poverty, which he embraces with the same Alacrity, and as chearfully submits to it, when the other leaves him, or is taken from him: Whereas the covetous Man is so possessed by his Wealth, that he doth not enjoy it, abhors Poverty as he fears Death, and is more contented to be separated from his Soul,

Soul, than from his Money; in a word, God preserves that Heart from Covetousness, which he inclines to his Testimonies. Vanity is no less an Enemy to Religion than the other, nor less dangerous; for though it doth not so imperiously engross the Heart, as Covetousness doth, yet it so surprizes all the Senses at once, and so insensibly, that either of them hardly recovers its proper Vigor and Integrity; and often when it cannot fill all the Room it self, it finds Means to shut out all that is serious, which would be quickly able to dislodge and expel it. It makes the Eye delighted with vain Objects, and fantastical Representations, that it cares less to behold what is serious and substantial; it makes the Ear to be pleased with idle, and loose, and profane Discourses, that it cares less to hear wise, and grave, and devout Animadversions; it corrupts the Palate with an affected Relish, that it is less pleased with the Taste of what is wholesome and nourishing; it perverts the whole Man, and all the Faculties of his Mind, from those discreet and godly Reflections and Recollections which can only dispose him to a true Affection, and a comfortable Dependence, for and upon divine Providence. We cannot make a more necessary and a more seasonable Prayer towards the establishing the Love of God in our Hearts, than that God will turn our Eyes, and all our Senses from Vanity, or affecting all that is vain.

O Lord, that we may be the better prepared to tread in the Paths which may lead us to thee, and dispose us to do that which will please thee, divert us from affecting any Thing that is in it self contrary, or that may mislead us from performing our Duty to thee, by inclining us to idle, vain, and unprofitable Delights, which at first please, and then ingross all our Thoughts and Imaginations: Let not our Eyes or Ears suffer any Thing to enter into us, which may corrupt our Hearts, or make our Hearts more capable of being corrupted by Vanity or Profit, that it may not be vacant and entire to receive and lodge thee, who canst endure no Rival or Inmate to be entertained with thee. Amen.

(vj.)

THE Mercy which God shews us in pardoning all the Sins and Offences of our Life, though it is very great, is not to be compared to that Mercy by which he gives us Grace not to commit those Sins and Offences: To prevent our Sickness, is a greater Power than to restore our Health: By this Grace we come to so clear an Understanding of his Will, and to so great a Delight in fulfilling it, that we disarm our Adversaries of all their offensive Weapons, when they can neither reproach us with pretending to trust God, and yet living so as if we trusted only in our selves; nor reproach God with permitting us to pay our constant Devotions to him, and encouraging us to rely and depend upon him, and yet suffering us to fall under the Power of our Enemies, and to languish under their Malice and Oppression; when they see that we behave our selves with more Courage, and Decency, and Chearfulness, than our Enemies have in the Exercise of that Tyranny; which is an Evidence in the Eyes of all Men, of some Excellence that all others are without, but such who are endued with that Grace. It is this Grace that makes us value our Salvation, and to love that Truth and Integrity which is to procure it for us; and it is God's infinite Bounty that he confers this Grace upon us all, if we desire and are Suitors for it; it is somewhat that we cannot give our selves, nor have it but by his Gift; but it is our own Fault if we are without it, because we may have it for asking, that is, for endeavouring to obtain it; it doth not exempt us from Blame that he doth not give it to us, since he hath given us all a Capacity to receive it, though he hath left us likewise Power to reject it: So that it is our own Election if we have it not. If we love Truth, and set our Hearts upon it, and upon the necessary Effects which flow from it, we are sure to attain to the Joys of Heaven; but if we set our Heart upon Lies, upon the Fraud and Falshood of the World, it is not Reason that two such different and contradictory Affections and Ways should conduct us to the same Lodging and Repose. If God should give the true and right Guide to the one, and impose a false Guide upon the other, it would be too much Partiality and Injustice in a common Father; but when he holds out the same Light to manifest the way to all, he may very justly permit him who loves Darkness more than Light, to sail by his own Compass, and to tread in a Path of his own chusing. It is no less Violence and Constraint to carry a Man to a Feast, who would not go thither, than to carry him to a Prison, and throw him into a Dungeon, where there is nothing to eat; and God uses no Violence of either Kind: No Prince can confer a Favour upon a Man who will not accept it. If God himself holds out his Hand to give, and we refuse to hold out our Hand to receive, it is our own Perverseness, if we have no Share of his Bounty. No Man who did diligently enquire and seek after his Precepts, hold up his Hands to him in the Meditation upon his Commandments, ever found himself without such a Proportion of Grace, as did well support him in the Exercise of his Duty before the greatest Power on Earth, and preserve him from being ashamed or afraid to undergo any Punish-

Punishment that could be inflicted upon him for that Transgression. We can with no Reason or Modesty hope that God will open the Door to us, until he plainly hears us knock to come in.

O Lord, thou art our Sword and our Buckler; and as we can by thy Favour and Grace resist our Enemies, and defend our selves against them, so without thee we are disarmed, and must be trod under their Feet: We cannot so much as pour out our Supplications unto thee, nor take Delight in any Thing that will please thee, without the Assistance of thy good Spirit; we cannot entertain one Good-Will and Desire in our Hearts, but by Infusion from thee: O let us never be without that Divine Infusion, that we may first understand all thy Precepts, and then take the highest Pleasure in observing and practising them: And let no Earthly Power be able to terrify us in the Prosecution of what will be acceptable and pleasing to thy Divine Majesty. Amen.

(vij.)

THERE cannot but be a wonderful Difference between the Thoughts, and Words, and Actions of pious and godly Men, who have found the Joy and Comfort of thinking upon God's Word, and depending upon his Providence and Promises; and those of vicious, and profane, and wicked Persons, who propose only to themselves the Pleasures and Benefits of this World, and dare not perplex themselves with the Thoughts of the next: Since Men of such several Constitutions, and so different Ends, do seldom concur in any Conclusion: But they do not more differ in any one Affection or Expression, than in the Subjects and Objects of their mutual Joy and Grief with Reference to others, which are Passions in which Men are usually reconciled, by the Obligations of Humanity; it being generally held an Action of Barbarity to be delighted in the signal Misfortune and Calamity of a Stranger, or to be sorry and grieve at the Happiness of another, in which we our selves have no Damage or Disappointment. The malicious wicked Man is never so much transported with Joy and Delight, as when he sees a Man whom he hath hated and envied for his Reputation of Virtue and Honesty, (for there is a Reverence for, and an Envy of that Character, and the Integrity that advances it, even in the most debauch'd Men) fall under some Obloquy and Reproach, how unjust soever; and though he uses all License in his own Practice, and in truth affects none but those of the same Indulgence, here he exercises the Severity of the greatest Magistrate, and helps to pull down the unfortunate Man's Reputation and Credit, that he may never more be able to hold up his Head. It is quite contrary with the religious and devout Person, who knows the unspeakable Pleasure and Joy of a good Conscience, and so feels none of the Jest and Scoffs of those who make themselves merry at all whose Manners they will not imitate; all that can befall his particular Person or Fortune, never troubles him, in comparison of the Agony he endures from the Misery and Destruction which he sees wicked Men bring upon themselves
by

by offending and incensing God in their dissolute and impious Lives, and by the Dishonour God sustains by their odious Provocations; the Sight and the Sense of this, fills his Soul with Horror, to see the gross and sinful Pleasures of the World, which have no farther End or Pretence than to please the sensual Body of Man, to have Power and Strength so far to corrupt the immortal Soul, (without whose sottish Conspiracy the Mischief could not be done) as to throw it self away to everlasting Perdition. Indeed he hath not a true Sense of Religion, nor feels the Effects of it, who is not disturbed and tormented with this Prospect; and it may be the sharpest, most sensible Grief and Trouble which pious and virtuous Men do undergo in this World (how much soever they may seem to be exercised under outward Calamities) is the Contempt which they see Men have of God, and all Goodness, and the insupportable Misery and Punishment they must undergo for that Contempt. They who love the greatest Enemies, or the worst Men so ill, as to be glad that they live in so impious a Condition, and provoke God so highly, that they know he will take a terrible Revenge; nay, who are not heartily afflicted and grieved on their Behalf, as well as on God's, who unwillingly undertakes his own Vindication, are not innocent themselves, and far from that Purity of Mind that Religion produces. This Trouble and Grief of Mind, this Agony and Horror for and against, and on the Behalf of (for in this Case for and against are no Contradiction) the highest Form of wicked and blasphemous Persons, is the natural Effect and Result of that Sincerity of Religion which Men attain to, who think of God's Law, and have kept his Precepts.

O God, give us thy Grace, and the Assistance of thy Holy Spirit, that we may so far remember, and heartily endeavour to observe and perform thy Commandments and Precepts, that we may have a just Confidence to put thee in Mind of the Promises thou hast made to all those who do so observe them: Let us feel, from the Integrity of our Conscience, Comfort in those Afflictions to which thou thinkest fit to subject us, and in thy own good Time remove those Afflictions from us, by putting an End to them. Infuse into our Hearts so great a Love of thee, and so great a Desire and Delight to please thee, that we may have a perfect Detestation of all evil and wicked Actions, and a Christian Reception for all those who provoke thee by such Actions, in respect of the Dishonour they do to thee, and of the miserable and endless Calamity which they bring upon themselves by offending thee; convert them, and make all the World Partakers of thy Mercy. Amen.

(viii.)

HE hath made a great Progress in Virtue and Religion; who looks upon God as his Portion; he must very well have thought upon his Ways, and carefully have kept and observed his Directions: and then he hath a Portion indeed, sufficient to support him through all the Difficulties and all the Distresses of the World; a Portion that will not waste, and that neither Force nor Fraud can take from him: But then it is a Portion that will bear no Mixture; it will not be a Joint Purchaser, admit a Treasure of a worse Allay to be employed with it in the acquiring what it desires. He who hath God for his Portion, must renounce all the Portions of the World, all the Stratagems of Craft and Dissimulation, to bring that to pass which he sets his Heart upon, because he cannot set his Heart upon that which he hath not Stock enough to purchase and obtain: No Man can want, that hath a Stock which will not waste; and the little Cruse that would run till it filled great Vessels with Oyl enough to pay all the poor Widow owed, and reserved enough for her own Subsistence, was a more convenient Wealth, than the Bulk of a Warehouse and a great Collection of Merchandise would have been. This Portion gives a great Lustre to the greatest Plenty, and a very wholesome and comfortable Relish to the greatest Poverty; and the Heart is as much at ease in the Midnight of the one, as in the Sun-rising of the other. There is not a better Expedient towards the obtaining this Perfection, and compassing this excellent inestimable Portion, than to make a Friendship with, and to hold a continual Conversation with wise, virtuous and pious Men; which indeed is the strongest, noblest, and indeed the sole Antidote that preserves us from the Contagion, and expels the Poyson of wicked Men, and of the most wicked Age; for there are particular Vices and Wickednesses, which do sometimes possess an Age and a Climate; as the Plague when it grows to that Degree that it infects the Air, so that Health cannot inhabit there; when Profaneness or Blasphemy is introduced by the Countenance and Authority of great and powerful Men, it doth not expire with the Promoters, but it is often so fixed in the Age, in the Spirit and Genius of the Time, that it is not dispossessed without great difficulty and strong Combination of the best and most Religious Conversation; and retains still some of the old Devils Sauciness, who, when they saw they were to be dislodged, desired our Saviour that he would suffer them to go into the Herd of Swine; they would be content to keep worse Company, so they might stay in the Country; they doubted not they should recover nobler Habitations; those Vices will keep a long Residence and Footing before they are rooted out. They who prescribe Retirement and Sequestration from the Society of Men, as the nearest Path to Heaven, have found a Way thither that *David* was not acquainted with: he could not think of a surer Convoy for that Journey, than the constant Company of those who loved and feared God; he knew there could be no Miscarriage in such Company. Solitariness is no Guard, and it too often falls out, *cui non satius sit cum quolibet esse, quam secum*; ill Company and other Temptations are most likely to get in, where good Company is shut out: He takes the best Care for himself that can be expected of him, that loves and takes Delight in the Society and Friendship of good and discreet Men; he grows insensibly into the same Likeness, and cannot be distinguished from them in his Practice; no pestilent Weeds ever grow up in a Soil so cultivated:

ted : whereas the most innocent and ingenuous Inclinations venture too much upon their Stock of Virtue, and run great Hazard, who find any Pleasure and Satisfaction in the Company and Conversation of corrupt and evil Men, how well qualified soever : It is very hard to detest the Vices, and very well to love the Company.

O Lord, enable and dispose us by thy Grace, to despise all the dangerous Allurements and Temptations of this World, that we may look upon thee as the most ample and large Portion for a very liberal Supply of all we can stand in need of ; that we may have that entire Affection for thee, and Submission and Obedience to all thou dost require, infuse into us a dislike of, and aversion from the Company of all licentious and evil Men ; and make us delight in the Society and Conversation of those who do delight in the Study of thy Law, and in living according to thy Commandments. Amen.

(ix.)

IF the knowing our selves, and the knowing other Men, be the principal Ingredients into Wisdom, surely Affliction and Distress is the best Expedient towards making us wise ; it makes us know our selves, by removing all those Obstructions and false Representations which kept us from the knowing our selves, and by exposing all our Faults and all our Follies undisguised and naked to our View ; and then makes us know other Men, by their appearing to us in their own natural Colours, without those Masks of Hypocrisy which they usually wore before us in our Prosperity. Affliction discovers us to our selves ; makes us enquire after that which we were not heretofore willing to find ; humbles us to discerning all that Weakness and Folly in our selves, which our Pride kept covered from our Sight, or so gilded over that they had another Semblance ; we are then in no danger of being flattered by other Men, and so less apt to flatter our selves, which used to keep us from discovering any Thing that was amiss. It makes us trace our Misfortunes to the first Spring and Rise, and there clearly discern what Inconvenience attended this Oversight, when we would not be at the Trouble of Consideration, and what Mischief waited upon that Obstinacy, when we scorned to retract or acknowledge what our own Conscience told us was not well ; but would therefore prosecute, because we had begun. The Throngs of Acquaintance and Friends, which would not allow us Time to be with our selves, have left us, and give us no more Trouble ; so that we are at leisure to confer with and look into our selves : *Some Man is a Friend for his own Occasion, and will not abide in the Day of thy Trouble ; some Friend is a Companion at the Table, and will not continue in the Day of thy Affliction, but in thy Prosperity will be as thy self, and will be bold over thy Servants ; if thou be brought low he will be against thee, and will hide himself from thy Face,* was an Observation as old as the Son of Syrach *, and every Age since hath manifested it to all Men by abundance of Instances ; and this Wisdom is only gotten by Affliction ; the prosperous Man hath it not, but believes all his Friends are as his Fortune, fixed, and not to be shaken, and will all lay down their Lives for him ; which the afflicted Man finds to be quite otherwise, and hath paid for his Wisdom, and it may be finds it necessary to conceal his Bargain. But above all, Adversity

* Eccles. vi. 8, 10, 11, 12.

fity reduces all our straggling Thoughts and wandering Imaginations to the true Standard of God's own Commandments, and by the Knowledge of our selves, in which we had been so much mistaken, and by the Knowledge of other Men, in which we had been so grossly ignorant, instructs us in the true Knowledge of him; it teaches us the true Christian Discretion, to distinguish between the Taste and Relish of those Pleasures which are enjoyed in our Wanderings, in those By-ways into which our Passions and our Appetites lead us out of the Path prescribed by him, and the real and substantial Delight which they are possessed of, who keep his Precepts with their whole Heart. It teaches us Christian good Husbandry, in knowing the Difference between the Plenty and Wealth which proud and wicked Men are possessed of, in the Thousands of Gold and Silver which they have hoarded up, how wretchedly and unjustly soever gathered together; and that lasting Riches which pious and devout Men treasure up, out of Gains honestly and conscientiously made, and in Actions of Bounty and Charity, by which the Spirits and Souls of those are refreshed who undergo Misery and Reproach, for preferring the Feast of a good Conscience in a Prison or in Banishment, before the greatest Honours and Preferments in a Court, which must be obtained by doing that which God hath forbidden to be done, or at least by not seeing to dislike it when it is done. As the Law of God's Mouth is the greatest and most inestimable Treasure, so the Study and Practice of it must be attended with the greatest Wealth.

O Lord, since the going out of those Paths which thou hast prescribed us to walk in, leads us into a Labyrinth and Wilderness of Folly and Madness, out of which we know not how to disintangle our selves; teach us so much Wisdom and Understanding, that neither the Counsel nor Example of ill Men, or our own more dangerous Affections or Inclinations, may draw us into those Streights, from which we know not how to return: If thy great Loving-kindness and manifold Mercies be not strong and prevalent enough to withhold, withdraw or divert us from those Enormities, awaken and instruct us by such wholesome Afflictions, as may convert us from all Deviations, and reduce us to a perfect Understanding of all thy Precepts, to a Delight in thee, and an entire Obedience to all thy Commandments; and then remove those Afflictions from us, that they may not break us when we bow under them. Amen.

(X.)

WHEN the wicked perish there is shouting, says Solomon *; in perditione impiorum erit cantus, says the vulgar Latin, not a confused Noise of the Multitude, as upon all Occasions of Novelty, but a Noise of Joy in Singing and Melody, as Kings triumph after the winning of Battles: So upon the Reduction or Destruction of wicked Men, all the World is glad, and celebrate it as the Victory of God Almighty, against whom bold and obstinate Sinners make a perpetual War, by making no Account of his Providence, and opposing his Commands; and therefore the subduing such insolent Contemners of his Laws, by what Means soever it is brought to pass, whether by some signal Judgments from Heaven, or (which are Arrows shot out

* Prov. xi. 10.

out of the same Quiver) by some notorious Disappointment of their Counsels, in turning that to their Ruin which they projected for their Exaltation, is looked upon as the enlarging God's Quarters, and making more Room to plant Christianity in. The Joy is not less universal, when God eminently redeems a Nation or a People from some notable Calamity, under which they have groaned by the Power of tyrannical Oppressors; who, contrary to Justice, have exacted an Obedience to their imperious Commands, and imposed Burthens upon their Consciences, as well as Impositions upon their Estates. When Divine Providence rescues such a Nation out of the Jaws of Cruelty and Slavery, and restores it to the Liberty, and to all the Privileges it ought to enjoy, the World is full of Joy and Amazement; and looks upon that unlooked for Act of Omnipotence, as God's own Vindication of his own Cause, which he would not vouchsafe but to a People much in his Care, and which he resolves to protect from all future Oppression; which they may be sure of if they do not degenerate from all Virtue and Religion, and involve themselves into a new Apostacy. It is with God as it is with Man; we all naturally love the Work of our own Hands, and the more we have done towards making any Thing perfect, the more we are inclined and delighted in the prosecution of it to Perfection; every Man is pleased *tueri opus*, and though the Potter may do what he will to or with his own Clay, and make a better or a worse Vessel of it, yet when he hath taken the Pains to knead and polish a very beautiful Piece of Workmanship, in which his Skill is magnified, he seldom dashes it against the Wall, and reduces it into its first Matter. We have a very great Tie and Obligation upon God Almighty, from the Pains and Care he hath taken in the Making and Forming us, that he will not suffer such an excellent Piece of his own Art, to perish and come to nothing, and worse than nothing, for want of understanding how to please him; but when he hath added that Understanding to his other Workmanship, given us Laws and Statutes to guide us, our Crime will be unpardonable, and our Punishment irremediable, if we live as if we were without Law, and set our Hearts upon any Thing else. We had been much better never to have known him, than not to love him; and we cannot pretend to love him, if we do not take delight in pleasing him; much less if we drive his Mercies from us, by a proud and stubborn Disobedience; or if we make those Chastisements which he sends to reclaim us, Arguments of Murmur, and repining at his Providence, and so to drive us farther from his Fatherly Protection.

O Lord, we are thy Creatures, and thou art our most merciful and gracious Creator; we are nothing but what thou hast made us, and therefore we beseech thee to make us acceptable to thee, by directing all our Thoughts, and Words, and Actions to serve and please thee: Make us the better for those Afflictions with which thou hast exercised us, and which thou didst send upon us out of thy extream Kindness, to awaken us out of the Lethargy of Sin and Death, and to make us capable of thy tender Mercies: Let us be ashamed to be in the Number of those, who, notwithstanding thy Corrections, are perverse in following their own Ways, which lead to their own Destruction: Let our Hearts be fixed upon and devoted to thee, that we may love and fear thee to our Lives End. Amen.

(xi.)

THE Way to Heaven is not so very straight and smooth, but that we may very well doubt and stumble in it; nor is it any Argument that we are out of the Way, because we are weary, and even fainting in it; he who walks with most Circumspection, is not out of Danger of slipping: When the afflicted and oppressed Man hath possessed his Soul with Patience the most he can, if after a Long-suffering he can neither with his bodily outward Eyes discern any Person like to be able and willing to help him, nor with the inward Eyes of the Mind discover any possible Way or Means for his Relief, it is no wonder if his Spirits grow somewhat faint and languishing. Can God give Bread in the Wilderness, can he give Drink out of the Rock, is an original Diffidence that will never be eradicated out of the Mind and Spirit of Man: Is God like to give us Support in Banishment, when he hath suffered us unjustly to be driven out of our own Country? Can we reasonably expect that Strangers will be kind, and take Compassion upon us, when they see that we are robbed and spoiled by our Friends, and those who have been obliged by us? And when we are vexed and parched with these melancholy Reflections, if we do still support in our selves a faint Confidence that he will at last deliver us, and thereupon resolve to use no corrupt Means to deliver our selves, it is with a frequent Murmur of when, and how long, and with a Wish that he would put an End to our Lives, that there might be an End of our Troubles; which is far from that Patience and Resignation which God expects, who requires a Cheerfulness, as an Acquiescence in his good Pleasure. And yet after all this, a devout Heart will recover it self; it may be weary, and languish in the Way, be for a Time without that Alacrity that should refresh it; but it will by no Suggestions or Temptations be carried out of the Way, put its Hope and Confidence in any other Relief: It will remember former Deliverances, of a Magnitude equal to what would now put it into the Condition it could desire to be in; former Banishments sustained, and that those Wildernesses have yielded both Health and Refreshment, until the Afflicted have found a fair Passage out of them, and a safe Port to betake themselves to. And from this Recollection it recovers Strength and Spirit for the Journey, and believes that it may very reasonably promise it self, and depend upon a sure and infallible Assistance and Vindication. Let wicked Men dig what Pits they can in the Way, use all the Stratagems they can to betray and surprize the Innocent, and weak Men have as many Inventions as they will to mislead them, they will discover the Pits and avoid them, and delude all the other Inventions, by keeping themselves strictly to their Duty, without fear of Mischief or Inconvenience. That which our Translation says, *The proud have digged Pits for me*, the vulgar *Latin* from the *Greek* hath rendered, *Narraverunt mihi iniqui fabulationes*, ill Men have made many idle Discourses to me; as if there could not be a greater Disturbance and Interruption to good Men, in the Progress they make towards Heaven, or a greater Obstruction and Diversion in that Journey, than the idle and impertinent Talk and Discourse of Men; which not seeming to carry in it any Thing of Wickedness, and somewhat of Delight, according to the natural Faculties of the Discourers, usually surpriseth good Men, and lessens their Application and Pursuit of what is serious. And without doubt such Discourses, from which nothing of

Wisdom or Knowledge is to be attained, and by which the Minds of Men are too easily softened and aliened from Industry, is too much the Business of the World. But if we enlarge the Consideration farther, to the loose and dissolute and prophane Discourses of Men, to the mocking and scoffing at Religion and all Things Sacred; to the laughing and reproach of all Gravity, and Chastity of Words, of all Sobriety, and Sincerity of Actions; to the War that is made against all Virtue and Temperance in the common Conversation of the World; the Devil himself cannot dig more dangerous Pits for the Disturbance, and grieving the best Men in the joyful Exercise of Religion, when they see God so provoked to pour down his Vengeance upon a Nation, who cannot be induced to any Reverence and Fear of his Majesty, from the most signal Acts of his Mercy and Goodness; nor indeed convinced of his Power and Severity, except it be made manifest by their Destruction; and therefore have much more Reason to apprehend that he will execute this his terrible Judgment, than to hope that he will be longer prevailed with to repeat his former gentle, ineffectual Loving-kindness towards them.

O Lord, refresh and strengthen us, that we may never be weary nor discouraged from Performance of our Duty to thee, nor observing what thou hast commanded us to do: Let no Oppression make us impatient to bear what thou thinkest fit for us to undergo, nor no Reproaches make us ashamed of any Disgrace for the Testimony of a good Conscience. The Prophaneness and Blasphemy that is spoken against thee, doth exceedingly grieve us; but we beseech thee let it never corrupt us to a less regard of thy Power, because thou dost defer taking Vengeance upon them. Make our Hearts perfect towards thee, and then we shall patiently wait for thy Deliverance in thy own Time. Amen.

(xii.)

IF Steadiness and Constancy to what a Man says, be a Virtue of so high an esteem amongst all Men, that he who is observed never to have broken his Promise or falsified his Word, is believed throughout the World, and needs nothing to live upon but his Word; how great Comfort and Satisfaction must they have, who have fixed their intire Confidence upon God's Word, and without any Hesitation look upon all that he hath promised, as if it were already in their own Possession? for they know that the Earth itself is not more fixed and immoveable, nor more incapable of being changed, than every Word of his Mouth is. Kings and Princes may break their Words, when they are or are not able to make them good, and repeal their Promises when it is either inconvenient or impossible to perform them; and few Princes are so punctual as not sometimes to swerve from what they once intended to have done, but from the Beginning of the World to this Day, it hath never been known that a Tittle of God's Word hath failed, or that he hath broken one of his Promises: And if it were possible that he should, pious and religious Men would be of all Men the most miserable, who decline and renounce many alluring Pleasures and Conveniencies, because they are declared to have, how pleasant soever they look to the Eye, a very bitter Relish, which continues and remains very long; whereas what is of Delight in them
vanishes

vanishes in a Moment; and undergo and submit to many Distresses and much Contempt, because they are assured the Agonies of those last a very little Time, and that they are succeeded immediately by Plenty and Honour, and all the Joys imaginable, which last without Alteration or Diminution to Eternity. And if this Ground of their Election were liable to a doubt, that it were only probable it may so come to pass, their foolish Presumptions would make them more ridiculous: But since the most avowed impudent Sinner doth not pretend to doubt the Veracity of all that God hath said, or the least imagination that God cannot or will not perform all his Promises; but flatters himself rather with a Wish than a Hope, that some of those Promises may hereafter belong to him; however, chuses to enjoy the Present, the Satisfaction whereof he is well versed in and fully understands, rather than to wait for that which he finds long in coming, though the Duration of it makes never so ample a Recompence; the conscientious godly Man easily satisfies himself, that he chuses better for himself in expecting a Reversion, which he is most sure will fall to him, and being fallen will dry all those Tears which he shed, and wipe away all those Wrinkles which he contracted in that Expectation. And indeed, from the very Reasonableness of his Election, in that he hath done a wiser as well as an honefter Thing, he fortifies himself so well against those Accidents which fall out, that he is seldom surprized, never dismayed at any Adversity, nor ever envies their Power, nor the Persons who are possessed of it, who apply it only to do Mischief; very well knowing that the Hurt they intend to do to others, they do really bring upon themselves. This solid Confidence turns the Edge of any Affliction it meets with, that it makes no Impression where it falls; and the pleasant Relish of this Cordial is so predominant, that it corrects all the Bitterness of the worst Potion he can be obliged to drink, till he comes to be possessed of his long looked for Reversion, when he sees the very Dregs of that Potion wrung and squeezed out for a Draught, which they who hated and despised him, and who prepared that Potion for him, cannot possibly avoid the drinking off.

O Lord God, who art from everlasting, and hast promised the good Things of this, and the better Things of the next World, to all those who love and fear thee as they ought to do, and who dost never fail in any Thing that thou dost promise, let us never forget the Conditions upon which all thy Promises are made; and give us Grace to perform those Conditions, that we may with Confidence put thee in Mind of those thy Promises; and let that Confidence support us in all our Afflictions, that our Enemies may not prevail so far upon us as to imagine that thou hast forsaken us; but make our Behaviour in those Afflictions be some Evidence to the World that thou hast not utterly forsaken us, and then put an End to them, that we may magnify thy Name with Joy and Gladness. Amen.

(xiii.)

IT is no necessary Condition in Human Laws, that all who are bound to obey them are bound to love them; obey them we must, though we do not like them; and Laws are therefore made, to compel Men to do that which they would not do if such Laws were not made. It is the Policy and Duty of Princes to establish just and convenient Laws, and to repeal and alter

ter them when any notable Inconveniencies shall appear by a strict Observation of them; but Subjects must not deny their Obedience to them because they are inconvenient, which Liberty would quickly put an End to all Laws, the best whereof obliges some Men to do what they have no Mind to do: Yet there is no Question but Obedience is best paid, and that Government is most happy where the Subjects live under those Laws which they take delight in obeying; which is a greater Testimony of God's Blessing upon the People, and of his Disposal of their Hearts to a right Obedience, than that there is nothing in the Laws which any Man would wish to be altered. It is another kind of Obedience which God expects to be given to his Laws, which he who doth not love can never obey, because the Obedience consists in the Love; they have all the Justice imaginable in them, for they require us to do nothing but what were best and most convenient for us to do if we were not required; and then they have Bounty unlimited to gratify and reward us beyond our own Expectation, if we do that which our very Duty would oblige us to do; and therefore, if we do not love them, we do not love ourselves, we know not what is good for our selves, we are without any Consideration, without any Meditation what we ought to do. the Truth is, it is the highest Folly, the greatest want of Understanding and Discretion, if we take delight, if we love any Thing but what is commended to us in God's Law, or what is permitted by, or consistent with it. Would we have Advantage over our Enemies, it makes us wiser than they, and Wisdom will undoubtedly prevail in the End; it keeps us more innocent than they, or than they desire to be, and Innocence will assuredly triumph over all its Opposers; do we affect Knowledge and Understanding, which is the noblest Affectation, and most proportionable to the large Soul of Man, it supplies us with abundance more than all our Masters had, who taught us all the Learning and all the Policy that the World is pleased with, and desires to be governed by; it gives us an Understanding that doth not only enable, but forces us to practise all that it enjoins, which no other Understanding doth. No Men break Laws more than they who understand them, and no Men violate Conscience more than they who pretend to be governed by it. But they who set their Hearts and Affections upon the Law of God, see and discern every little Temptation, or Pause that would grow into a Temptation, to invite them to decline it, and thereby only know that they do understand, because they practise what they know, because they do not cherish any light or idle Affection, till it grow strong enough to interrupt them in the Pursuit of what they are obliged to do; no Body willingly departs from what he loves: *Forfake her not, and she shall preserve thee, love her and she shall keep thee*, says Solomon of Wisdom. * If the preserving us in Safety from the greatest Dangers, and the supporting us in Plenty in the greatest and most general Want and Misery, will not invite us to this Love, to the fixing our most intire Affection upon this lovely Object, we are not worthy to escape the meanest Hazard we can be exposed to, nor to be relieved in the first Distress that shall befall us; which will fall upon us the more heavily, the more deplorably, because our own Election, our own Malice hath brought it upon us; we have invited, courted and brought it upon our selves, by the Judgment and Determination of Wisdom it self: *All they that hate me love Death* †, and if their Affections are not strong enough to carry them to the one, they cannot complain that they are led to the other.

* Prov. iv. 6.

† Prov. viii. 36.

Good God, if thy Words have not a better Relish, and are not much sweeter in our Mouths, than all the Vanities and Pleasures in this World, and all the Plenty that attends them, and accompanies those who enjoy them; it is because our Taste is corrupted for want of Love to thy Law, and want of that Understanding which that Love would produce: Give us Grace to meditate always upon it; and bless that Meditation so much, that we may love it, and set our Hearts upon it, till it hath made us wiser and more understanding, than any of those are who work Iniquity; and that that Wisdom and Understanding may be so notorious in our Lives and Conversations, that they who go astray may be convinced and converted by our Example and good Behaviour to adore thy Law, and to observe thy Precepts. Amen.

(XIV.)

WHEN I waited for Light there came Darkness, * was one of Job's Complaints, in the Enumeration of the several Calamities that afflicted him; and there can hardly be a greater, than for a Man who is necessarily to pass in untrodden Paths, and near great Precipices, to the avoiding whereof the Light is all his Safety, to find himself covered in Darkness; which is not pleasant to him who sits still, but very dangerous to him that travels: And it was one of the last miraculous Judgments which God sent upon the Egyptians, and which contributed most to the Conviction of their Obstinacy, that when Moses stretched out his Hand, there was a thick Darkness in all the Land of Egypt, a Darkness that might be felt: They saw not one another, neither rose any from their Place for three Days, but all the Children of Israel had Light in their Dwellings. † God never suffers the Wicked and the Innocent to be covered with the same Darkness; they have different Guides and different Paths: the one hath no Reason to love the Light, because his Works are evil, not fit to be seen, and therefore the fitter for Darkness; whereas the Comfort of the other is, that he always sits in the Light, and hath a Light to walk by; a Light that cannot be extinguished by any Storms or Tempests, by the Power or Rage of the greatest Enemies, nor be eclipsed by any Clouds of Oppression and Adversity. But in all the Darkness which that can cast about him, the just and conscientious Man hath his Light still by him; a Light that puts him into an easy Posture of Acquiescence whilst the Thickness of the Darkness continues, and then shews him a Way out when it is Time for him to go; he knows what God expects he should do, and what he requires he should not do, which is Light enough to keep him from stumbling. And being thus secure, he may with a good Conscience swear that he will not wander out of the Way; and God likes the Confidence and Presumption so well, that he never suffers such a Swearer to be perjured. Want of Resolution is the greatest Cause of the Sins we commit; and though we have Light enough about us, we shut our Eyes that we may thereby create a Darkness to conceal our Deformity. He who takes an Oath of himself that he will not commit a Sin to which he is most inclined, seldom breaks his Word; there is a Cowardise in all Sin, that makes it upon any noble Opposition and Resistance shrink and quit the Field, it cannot endure a Syllogism, and quickly discerns by the

8 R

Posture

* Job xxx. 26.

† Exod. x. 22, 23.

Posture of the Resistance, whether it be a faint Defence for want of Opportunity, or from any other Defect which Time may supply, and in that Case waits with all servile Application and Patience; or whether it proceeds from that Light of Conscience, which will not suffer him to make a false Step into any Path that might lead him to Darkness; and if it be that Light, it flies away like Lightning, and never more presumes to assault him. The Laws and Commandments of Men are frequently so obscure, intricate and perplexed, that we are not sure when we observe them, and do often break them when we have no Intention to be disobedient: It is only the Prerogative of God's Law, that it is all Light; there is no Room for doubting, we see all that we are to do, and all the Obstructions which lie in our Way to hinder us from doing it; which we may either decline or tread upon, not encounter, if we have not Courage to subdue. It is not only a Light to guide and lead us, but a Light to dazzle their Eyes who would destroy us, and make them spend all their Strength and Fury in Strokes upon the Air, in their own vain Imaginations, which can do us no harm; it makes us always carry our Lives in our Hands, that having them still in our Sight, we may know the full Value of them, and be ready to lay them down when more is asked for them than they are worth; that is, when to preserve that short Term, we must forfeit that Inheritance which would else belong to us.

O Lord God, what shall we offer unto thee for thy great Mercy, in making all thy Commandments so clear and plain to us, that the Sun it self doth not more shew us in the Day the Ways that we are to travel in, than the Light of thy Word doth direct us how we may infallibly please thee? O let that Light never be extinguished or removed out of our Sight, nor suffer us ever to be guided by any other Light, how glorious soever it may appear to our Eyes; since it will not only lead us into those Snares and Traps which the Enemy of Mankind hath laid in our Way, but guide us into utter Darkness, from whence there is no Redemption. Accept our Oaths and our Vows that we will perform thy Will, and never suffer us to depart from it. Amen.

(XV.)

THERE is an Ingredient of Hate and an Ingredient of Fear, in the Composition of that Love which is perfect and violent: No Man loves Truth enough, who doth not hate Lies; otherwise *Solomon* could not have declared, *that there is a Time to love and a Time to hate.** Whoever loves heartily, doth as heartily hate whatsoever is opposite or contrary to the Object of his Love, and is never out of fear that he shall not possess what he loves. That Man who is truly Religious, who loves Religion as his Retreat and Shelter in all Storms of Affliction, or Distress, or Perplexity, cannot but hate and abhor all Prophaneness and Impiety; and though he cannot be sure whilst he is in this World not to keep Company with any who are so affected, because those Vices are not always apparent in the Men who are possessed by them, and they commonly are most bold and confident Intruders where they are not liked; yet he avoids them all he can, and ever makes it evident that he is in no degree pleased to be where they are. Pious and conscientious

* Ecclef. iii. 8.

scientious Men can no more endure the Company and Conversation of dissolute and licentious Persons, than honest and chaste Women can give themselves leave to be present at loose and unclean Discourses; and it is a very unhappy Sign that a Man hath not dedicated himself to Sobriety and Virtue, that he hath not a good Habit of Mind, how strict and severe soever he seems to be in his Practice, who takes any delight or permits himself to be in the Company of those, who profess to observe no Rules or Obligations of Decency or good Behaviour in their Words or in their Actions; who talk of Religion as a Scare-crow, to amuse and terrify Men of weak Parts, and of moral Honesty, as an impertinent Restraint of Fools from pursuing those Ways of Pleasure and Profit, which would yield them great Convenience and Benefit. No Man can be secure in his own Virtue, that he may not in Truth be corrupted by such infectious and contagious Conversation. By how much the Hate is lessened, by so much the Love is diminished; and he shall find less Appetite about him, to that severe Exercise by which he used to keep himself in good Order. However, he cannot but loose that Credit and Reputation with, and amongst good Men, which enabled him to do good to others; and whoever cares not to preserve that Credit and Reputation, is not enough in love with his own Innocence. Prudent Men do not usually take delight in the Company of those, who are notoriously disaffected to them whom they profess much to love and esteem; and the greater their Dependence is upon the one, the greater their Aversion is to the other. He is a very ill Courtier, who is found walking with any Person that is notably in the King's Displeasure; but he undergoes the highest Penalty, who dares communicate and correspond with the declared Enemies of his Prince, let the Cause of the Enmity be never so unreasonable or unjust. With what Discretion then, or with what Security, can we accustom our selves to the Company of those, who by their constant Neglect and Contempt of all God's Commandments, and their renouncing his Mercies, have made themselves so odious to him, that he treads them down every Day? and if he suffers them to grow up to any Heighth and Bulk, in Greatness and Power, and Prosperity, it is only to make his future treading them down to be the more notorious and remarkable; the Circumstances of their treading down shall distinguish them from all the other Race of Mankind. Let us therefore make our first approach to the Love of God, as the being without any eminent Folly is the first approach to Wisdom, by a perfect detestation and abhorring all Sin and Wickedness; which we cannot do enough, without we decline and hate all those who practise it, as long as they practise it. And when we have made our Love thus perfect to him, and that we have set our Hearts intirely upon him, and affect nothing else but to please him, a Fear and Jealousy will still become us, which Lovers are never without, that we do not express our Love well enough to make us acceptable, at least that it is not at best of that Worth and Value, as to dispose him to remit all the Errors and Defects of our Application.

O Lord, the Vices and Sins to which our natural Affections and Appetites too much incline us, are so many and so great, and the Company of our Friends and Acquaintance so prevalent to reconcile us to those Sins, and to lead us into others that we less affect, that by our own Passions, or the Examples of others, we are involved in so many Temptations, that without thy holding us up, and restraining us, we shall be ashamed that we had ever any Hope in thee, and that we ever knew thy Commandments; make our corrupt Affections the more odious

to us, because they are our own, and so the more false and treacherous in endeavouring to betray us; and let us the more abhor the ill Example of others, because they are our Friends and Acquaintance, and would lead us into a Conspiracy against thee. Confirm us in the Love and Fear of thee, that we may always keep thy Precepts. Amen.

(xvi.)

THERE is no Sort of Men more liable to Oppression, to Scandals, and Calumnies, which are as heavy a Kind of Oppression as any Power or Force can impose, than they who do with most Sincerity and Integrity execute and administer Justice: They who are not pleased with the Determination, how just soever, revenge themselves upon him who makes it, traduce his Person, and revile his Judgment. But God's Protection is seldom more eminent than in those Cases, and he rarely leaves those his Deputies to the Mercy of their Adversaries, or without a full Vindication of their Innocence; they may for a Time suffer under Obloquy and Disgrace, but in the End their Uprightness shall be much more notorious: They are Persons trusted by himself, and if they discharge their Trust as they ought to do, without Partiality or Consideration of Persons, he knows they must be exposed to a Million of Reproaches, which he holds himself in Justice obliged to preserve them from; and if they have Integrity enough in their Hearts to desire to do Justice, if they are not corrupted by their own Inclinations, he supplies them with Understanding and Judgment, that no Causes are too hard for them. Corruption may lead the most able and the most learned Judge into the grossest Injustice; but Defect of Understanding hath rarely swayed an upright Judge to a wrong Sentence. He that prays that he may do nothing but what is right, finds himself inspired in the most difficult Points, at all Seasons to determine according to Right. On the contrary, he who is in a Place of Justice, and endeavours out of Fear to anger Great and Powerful Men, to comply with their Desires, or out of coveting to be rich, or to satisfy his Ambition, perverts the Rule he ought to judge by; and so hopes by the Strength of his Wit, to make the Law it self accessory to the Wrong he doth; shall find his Wit fail him more than it uses to do, and shall be discovered and exposed to the Rage and Contempt of Men, and shall be as much ashamed of his Folly as of his Corruption, no Man taking Pity of him who miscarries out of the Way he should be in: whereas he who stands fast in it, finds many to assist him; besides, it is always honourable to perish in his Post. Whatever the Fate of those may be who are not yet admitted to any Knowledge of God's Law, and so are without any Light to guide them to or from what may please or displease him, there is too just Cause to fear, that they to whom he hath vouchsafed to communicate himself, and to impart that Light of his Word, and who terrify other Men with the difficulty of understanding it, and of observing that which they do understand of it, and thereby derogate from God's Justice, as if he would enjoin Impossibilities to be done by his Children; and they who make it so easy, that they well enough perform the Obligations of it, though they indulge several Vices to themselves, most opposite to what he commands, because Nature prompts and disposes them to it; and they who by an impetuous Course of Sinning, and by a strong Career of Indulgence to their most brutish Appetites,

tites, have made void all God's Law, by breaking all the Conditions which should have made it effectual and beneficial to them: I say, these bold and confident Enemies to Providence, have too much Reason to apprehend that their State will be much worse than the others; who, without knowing whom they please, or expecting any Reward for what they do, for Humanity-sake are just to those, and for Decency-sake are chaste with those with whom they live and converse, are temperate for Health-sake, and are kind to others because they are Men themselves. It is not the Climate, but the Manners, which entitles us to Christianity, and the being savage removes us much farther from it than the being *Indian*; and surely, they who know nothing of Heaven, and so cannot long to be there, will be more easily approached by our modest and decent Behaviour, by our Justice and wise Demeanor, by the Beauty of our Lives and Conversation, by our doing all lawful Things to please them, and nothing to provoke or offend them, than by reading them the History of our Saviour, and declaring the Doctrine that was preached by him.

O Lord God, we reverence and admire thy Justice, and acknowledge that thou canst not swerve from it; but we appeal to thy Mercy, of which we have Need, when we have done all that is in our Power: We do love thy Law, and from our Hearts desire to observe thy Precepts; but we have need of thy Assistance, that we may not be diverted from the Prosecution thereof, by any kind of Temptations, or discouraged by thy withdrawing thy Countenance from us, and suffering us for some Time to be under the Power of our Enemies: Make us, notwithstanding any Affliction we do or can undergo, perfectly hate all false Ways to get out of it, and never to depart from the Way thou hast prescribed to us; but let us always be found in it, that thou mayest be pleased with us, though all the World be offended. Amen.

(xvii.)

IF all that God expects from us be contained in the Decalogue, as it is generally conceived to be, nothing is more wonderful than that the whole Duty of Man, upon Performance whereof he is sure to receive such inestimable Reward, should be comprehended in so small a Room, and made so plain in so few Words; except that, being so plain and evident, we should perform and observe it no better: which must proceed from some laboured, acquired, and affected Wickedness in our selves; since, when there was so much more required, as is contained in the judicial and ceremonial Law, God himself pronounced it to be so easy to be observed, because it was not hid from them, nor far off, *But the Word is very nigh unto thee, in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart, that thou mayst do it,* * that it was their own inexcusable Fault, and a voluntary Rejection of their own, if having Life and Death set before them, they would not chuse Life, it being absolutely in their own Election: And our Task is yet so much more easy than theirs was, besides our being freed from the Ceremonial Law, in that we have no Temptation to that crying Sin of Idolatry, which was their Destruction: God hath no Rival amongst us, nor have we any Inclination to make to our
8 S selves

* Deut. xxx. 14.

selves any other God; whilst we profess to be Christians we cannot be Idolaters; and they might with much more Reason have excused themselves even for their Idolatry, that they were drawn away and worshipped other Gods by the Example of their Neighbour Nations, and that they might not be singular and unlike the rest of the World, than we, who can as easily wipe out the Memory of all God's Deliverances as ever they could, can excuse our being prevailed upon, and subdued by the most impetuous and most vehement Temptations to any Sin, that is as directly and with the same Penalties inhibited to us, as their Idolatry was: And in Truth, our Condemnation must be the more just, and consequently the more grievous, because, upon the continual reading and hearing God's Commandments read to us, we do believe, and can give our selves no Reason to the contrary, that it is in our Power to observe them all. Who doth not profess to have the same Opinion of, and the same Reverence for the Divinity and Majesty of God, as we are enjoined by those Commandments to have? And though the *Jewish* Sabbath is abrogated, who doth not pretend to separate himself one Day in the Seven from all bodily Labour, and to exercise himself in publick and private Devotions, and to dedicate that Day to God's Service, and to the Relief of their Spirits? Who thinks it hard to pay a full Reverence to his Father and Mother, and to his lawful Governors, or to forbear the murdering any Man? Whoever owned that he could not abstain from committing Adultery, or from Stealing? The greatest and most bare-faced Calumniator, and Traducer of the Honour and Reputation of his Neighbour, never pretended that it was not in his Power not to bear false Witness against him: Nor doth any Man acknowledge that he doth covet, or so much as desire any Thing that belongs to his Neighbour, without his Consent, and paying the full Value for it. So easy all these Injunctions seem to us, and within our own Power to perform; and without doubt, if our own Power be not sufficient, it is our own Fault if that Defect be not supplied by him who looks for nothing but to be asked. If we love God, and our Hearts be set upon and desire to obey his Commandments, he enlightens us with Understanding, and makes all Things easy to us, and will never suffer any Iniquity to have Dominion over us. He who is rebellious against his Superiors, or insolent towards them, owes it to the Malice of his own particular Heart; for he sees others obedient to them: and he who is unjust and tyrannical to those whom he can oppress, owes it to his own Pride and Uncharitableness; for other Men observe the Rules of Justice and good Neighbourhood to other Men: and so many Mens containing themselves within the Limits and Obligations of Chastity, is Argument sufficient that the Adulterer and unclean Person is transported by his own Lust, and burned by a Fire of his own kindling; which he might have quenched with his own Tears, and have made his Eyes have ransomed themselves, for having unwarily suffered so foul a Temptation to insinuate it self through them to his Heart. We may be surpris'd and assaulted by our unruly Passions, but we cannot be subdued and conquered, without our own Consent, and basely betraying our selves.

Good God, since thou hast made thy Commandments so plain and so clear, that the very View of them seems to afford us Light and Understanding to obey them, let not any Difficulty arise out of the Perverseness of our own Nature, to make that hard to us which thou hast made so easy, or to control our Obedience to thee. Make us superior to the Scoffs and Reproaches of ill Men, that we may never be ashamed of that Purity and Integrity that can only make us acceptable

ceptable to thee. Keep our Hearts always awake and watchful, that no corrupt or wicked Thought or Imagination get Entertainment or Lodging there. Let our Hands tremble when they are inclined to any Act of Outrage and Violence, and our Eyes passionately bewail the suffering any Thing to get an Entrance there, that may deface that Image of thy Beauty in our Hearts, which keeps all our Affections devoted to thy Service; and so extinguish that unlawful Fire before it come thither.

(xviii.)

WHEN the Law-giver is just, his Injunctions cannot be grievous, much less impossible to be observed: *The Mouth of the Just bringeth forth Wisdom*, says Solomon; * he never speaks any Thing himself that is not very grateful, nor ever commands any Thing to others, in observing whereof they do not receive Benefit and Advantage themselves. God commands Mankind to do nothing, which Mankind is not the worse for not doing; that is, the Generality suffer and are grieved when particular Men do not perform their Duty. All the Obligations of the First Table are so agreeable to the Nature and Spirit of Man, that they who are not yet arrived at so great Perfection, as to love and reverence the Divine Majesty as they ought to do, do yet abhor and abominate those who express any Contempt or Irreverence towards it; he hath no Religion at all, that is not exceedingly afflicted to hear Prophaneness and Blasphemy uttered, though it be by those who hate him, and who will be miserable for doing it. And the Duties which are enjoined in the Second Table are of such a Nature, that Mankind is the greatest Gainer, by their being punctually and exactly observed. They who will not pay that Reverence and Obedience to their Parents and their Governors as they ought to do, do not more offend and contradict God, than they do introduce a Confusion in all Government, and a Parity that must expose them to the same Neglect and Contempt of those who ought to be governed by them: They who violate the Rules of Justice, in robbing and oppressing them who are not able to contend with them, do but invite others, who have as little Conscience, and more Power, to exercise the same Injustice upon them, in not suffering them to possess and enjoy what is their own: And they who lay Snares to corrupt the Chastity of Women, and to alienate their Affections from their Husbands, do but prescribe a Way how strange Children shall be brought to inherit their own Estates, and how their own Wives may shake off their Loyalty. So that in Truth, Men ought to combine amongst themselves to establish those very Laws for their own Peace and Security, which God hath prescribed to them to observe to please him, and for their Salvation. We may very well therefore magnify their Justice and admire their Wisdom, which makes so good Provision for us in all the Conditions of Life we can be liable to: If we are poor and despised, they teach us how to keep an Innocence about us, that makes us superior to Princes who violate those Laws: If we are under any Afflictions and Calamities, which depress our Spirits, and make us too sensible of the Trouble and Anguish that proceeds from thence, we are revived and refreshed, by knowing whither to resort for Relief, and by remembering the Promises which are made to those who persevere in his Commandments; and though

* Prov. x. 31.

though we may sometimes be troubled to see Men who do not pay that Obedience to what is commanded, as we do, yet appear more fortunate; yet we quickly discern that there is a great Difference between the Tranquility of Mind that they know, and which we are possessed of, and between the short Pleasure which they take, and the Everlastingness of our Reward. His Law is capable of no Dispensation, and can never be repealed; no Temptation of Profit or Honour, can excuse us for swerving in any Degree from obeying any one of the Commandments, or for consenting, much less assisting another to violate any Part of them; no Disgrace or Threats, or the utmost Danger can absolve us for submitting or yielding to the Breach of them: But our Constancy must be firm, and not to be shaken; we ought no more to consent or to cherish an unchaste Design, of how powerful a Person soever, than to be the Contriver of a premeditated Murther, upon the Solicitation of the meanest and most obscure Person. And that Constancy and Obedience will give us such a Testimony of Conscience in this World, as shall be the nearest Emblem, and the best Harbinger of those Pleasures in the next, as shall admit no Interruption, or Diminution, or Discontinuance.

O Lord, let the unquestionable Justice of thy Commandments, and the great Benefit we receive in this World by a universal Submission to them, make that Impression upon us, that we may abhor all those Things, and all those Persons, which would lead us from the most strict and precise Obedience to them. Let no Example or Promises of other Men, nor any Suggestions from our own Inclinations or Appetites, ever prevail with us to believe that we may be dispensed with for the Breach of the least of them; but let us look upon the Violation of any Branch of one, as a Contempt of all, and a Forfeiture of what we might expect from our Obedience to the rest. Amen.

(xix.)

THERE are few Men who do not sometimes say some Prayers, and if all they pray for were granted, they would be very miserable; or rather, if all they speak of when they say their Prayers: for all saying of Prayers is not Praying, at least not that Praying which God hears, and considers, and accepts. The Manner and the Season of Prayer, is a Circumstance that doth very much advance our Prayer, and gets Access to the Ear of God. There is a customary Recital of Prayers, and as customary an Unconcernment in them; a chusing rather to go to the Church, than to pay the Penalty of not going thither; which finds no Acceptation, gets no Entrance into Heaven. Men have no Reason to imagine that God will consider what they say, when they themselves consider it not, nor think of him when they say it. The Fountain from which all Prayers flow, whether publick or private, is the Heart; not a drouzy and a sleepy Heart, a Heart that cares not whether what it asks be granted or no; nor a malicious corrupt Heart, which commonly makes its Prayers Cursings of other Men, and Wishes of Things only beneficial and agreeable to it self: but a pious and an humble Heart; a Heart that wishes no Harm to any Man, that thinks of what it utters with great Intentness, and of him to whom he utters it with great Reverence and Devotion, and is thereby warranted to use all Importunity; importunate
Prayers

Prayers thus formed, are very seldom rejected. *O Lord, hear our Prayers, and let our Cry come unto thee*, is a Part of our Church-Liturgy; the Voice and Noise of the Tongue, if it be sent out from the Heart, will awaken God Almighty, and make him propitious to our Prayers; they who cry aloud for Help, confess their own Impotence, and acknowledge his Power to whom they cry; and there is an Importunity and Cry of the Heart that makes as great a Noise, and is as effectual as that of the Tongue, and it may be reaches farther, because it moves in all Seasons, and its Silence is not the less importunate, because others can take no Notice of it. Loud and earnest Prayers are too often full of Affectation and Hypocrisy, and intended rather to please the Ears of Men, than to awaken God Almighty; but the Midnight Ejaculations, Prayers which close the Eyes for Sleep, and which prevent the Dawning of the Day, can never be counterfeit, and can proceed from no other Motive but the Plunges of the Heart, extended by all the imaginable Joy in the Contemplation of the Goodness of God, and Fear of his Displeasure; the Heart is the more intirely at work, because the Lips and the Tongue have the least Share in that Devotion. Loud and vocal Prayers are very laudable, and necessary for the Instruction of, and Communion with others, who are exercised in the same Distresses and Affections; yet they may be made without that Zeal and Fervour of the Mind, which only gives Life and Vigour to our Prayers; but the Tears and Sighs of the Night, kindle a Light in Darkness, to lead the Soul to the Prospect of all God's Mercies, and to dispose him to a bountiful Distribution of them according to our Necessities or Occasions. But neither the Manner of offering our Prayers, nor the Season in which they are offered, make them half so considerable, or acceptable, as the Matter of them: Too many Prayers are made for the obtaining that which he never grants to those who are most favoured by him; and the Earnestness and Clamour of them, proceeds more from the Passion Men have against their Neighbours, than from the Confidence they have in God; when they desire his Assistance more for their own Revenge than for his Glory; and calls those their Enemies, and desire his Judgments may be signally poured out upon them, who are only Enemies to their Vices, and are only angry with them for their offending and contemning the Divine Providence. All the Importunity and Fervency of *David's* Prayer was for Salvation, that he might be saved; which ought to be the End, and only End of all our Prayers; and if he thinks fit to grant us that, which he will grant to us if he sees that our Hearts are set only or principally upon that, it is no Matter for any Thing else: though it is not very likely that he will deny any Thing that is convenient to that Man whom he resolves to save, and to have him always about him, and in his Sight: I say, Salvation ought to be the End of all our Prayers; if we pray against grievous and heavy Afflictions, and Adversity, and the tyrannical Power of our Enemies, which may be proper Subjects for our Prayers, it ought principally to be, that our Patience may not be mastered, or our Spirits broken in that Manner by the one or the other, that we may be in danger to forfeit thereby the Hope of our Salvation.

O Lord, thou art nearer to all those who suffer any Calamity for the Testimony of a good Conscience to thee, than they can be who inflict those Calamities upon them; and canst much more easily relieve them, than the other can oppress them: Mercifully incline thine Ears to our Prayers, and suffer them not to lay any greater Burthen of any kind upon us, than thou givest us Grace to be able to bear; and whilst we do suffer, give us a lively Assurance of our Salvation,

and thereby some Evidence that we are exercised with those sharp Visitations, only that we may appear the more worthy of thy wonderful Deliverance. Amen.

(XX.)

NO Prayers are so effectual, so sure to be heard and accepted, as theirs who could have prevented the Danger they are in, or could free themselves from it when they are in it by swerving from their Duty, in complying with those who are grown to be their Enemies: When Men reject apparent Benefit and Advantage, rather than they will receive it upon dishonest Conditions; when they raise and provoke great Enemies by adhering to Justice, and performing the Obligations of Conscience, or by putting them in Mind of their Duty when they have a Mind to forget it; and those Enemies grow so powerful and mighty as to oppress them, and pursue them with Reproach and Contumelies; God is always at hand to plead their Cause, and to convert those who have been unreasonably and unjustly disposed to do them wrong, or to incline others, out of the Knowledge and Esteem of their Innocence, who are as powerful as the other, to take them into their Protection. Such Men are not usually redeemed from their Afflictions in a common Way, but receive some extraordinary Vindication and Deliverance from Divine Providence, that is at least as notorious as their Sufferance hath been: God reckons it but Justice to help those, who will not help themselves by doing any Thing that may displease him, and who, in contradiction to the greatest Number and the greatest Examples, dare do such an impopular and ungracious Thing, as to be religious, to prefer his Law before the Licence of Men, and Salvation to come before any present Preferment. The Affront, Reproaches, and Contempt, which pious and conscientious Men undergo from scoffing and prophane Men, is not a light Assault; and he who is able at the same Time to resist it, and to pray for those who insult over him, and to be more grieved for the Scandal and Indignity that is offered to God, and to his Divinity, by their licentious and impious Behaviour, than for any Disgrace and Injury done to himself, hath already a very good earnest of God's Assistance, and can reasonably presume that he shall not sink under any Affliction. They have no less a Title to God's extraordinary Favour, who upon the continual Meditation upon his Word and Precepts, have obtained the Grace and Ability to resist their private and inward Persecutors and Oppressors, who are as insolent, importunate, and impetuous, as any of the outward can be. He who can in the Height of his Anger and Rage, and against any evil Custom of Swearing, restrain himself from Oaths, and such devouring Words, by remembering that God hath expressly forbidden him to take his Name in vain, to use it unnecessarily in wanton Mirth, or to vent any unwarrantable Passion, hath studied his Commandments to purpose. He who can controul any irreverent Suggestion of his Thought or Imagination, and any rebellious Inclination against his Prince, by remembering the Duty and Obedience which God hath enjoined him to pay towards him, and that he is not to entertain an evil Thought of him, hath fed upon and digested the Scripture, and made it useful to him. They who expel a covetous Desire of what belongs to another Man, because they are forbidden to covet any such Thing, and they who quench the unruly Fire of their Lust, because God hath inhibited all Acts of Uncleaness, and would not corrupt the Chastity

flity of a Woman, because he hath pronounced Damnation to all Fornicators and Adulterers, have indeed applied the Counsel they have received so well, and observed the Injunctions they have submitted to, to so good a Purpose, that they may promise themselves a sufficient cherishing, and quickening, and supporting those Inclinations from God Almighty, and a full Accomplishment of whatsoever he hath promised from the Beginning. On the contrary, they who make no other Use of knowing his Pleasure, than to appear as conversant in the Scripture as other Men, and neglect to apply any of those precious Antidotes to the expelling of that Poison, for which they were only communicated to them, must blame themselves if they are left to struggle with their own Afflictions, and find no Assistance from him whose Statutes they have contemned.

O Lord, we can lay no Title to thy Mercy and Protection in any Afflictions, but such as have fallen upon us for our Duty to thee, and our Preservation of a good Conscience; if we have forgotten thy Laws, and have had no more regard for thy Precepts than they have had who triumph over us, we know not how to cry out for Deliverance from thee; yet we most humbly beseech thee, by what Guilt soever we have brought our selves into Affliction, sanctify those Afflictions so unto us that we may love thy Statutes, and detest our selves for not loving them sooner; and by setting our Hearts upon them for the future, be reconciled unto us for all that is past. Amen.

(xxi.)

WE cannot have a better Guard to preserve us from Oppression or Persecution, or to support us in it, tho' it be from Kings or Princes, than the standing in awe of God's Commandments, and the fearing him more than them; and if we fear him as much we ought to do, we shall fear them enough too; no Proportion of the Fear of God, will ever produce in us want of Reverence towards the King. *My Son keep my Words, and lay up my Commandments with thee; keep my Commandments and live,* says Solomon. * He knew well, that Kings could have no greater Security of the Affection and Obedience of their Subjects, than when they love Wisdom, which is the Fear of God; nor can Subjects have any other Defence against or in Oppression, than their standing in awe first of God, and then of the King. Men very rarely fall under any notable Persecution, before they have, how unwarily soever, first swerved from God's Word; and then they behave themselves in it with that Courage and Decency, that they are not dismayed and confounded with it. If their Innocence cannot preserve them from their Prince's Displeasure and Wrath, they will behave themselves so well under it, that they shall be at last thereby convinced of their Integrity. A Prince's severe and unjust Persecution can in no degree absolve a Subject from his Duty and Obedience; nor have we more need to have a very strict Reflection upon God's Precepts in the greatest Heighth of Prosperity, which is the Season when Men are least inclined to those Reflections, than we have in the strongest Current of an unexpected Oppression and unreasonable Persecution, when the Pride of our Innocence, and the Manifestation of the Inju-

* Prov. vii. 1, 2.

Injustice may probably transport us to such a degree, that we may contract a Guilt which we had not before. It may be, there is nothing more hard, than to attain to that Temper of Mind which will justify and become us in that Condition. We must not let our Spirits fall so low that we cannot raise them again, or that other Men may believe by the Dejection of our Mind, that our Guilt is as notable as the Vengeance that is taken upon us. On the other hand, our Patience must not have that Gaiety in it, as if we had less Reverence for the Hand that strikes us than we ought to have: We must not betray our Innocence so much, as that good Men may withdraw their good Opinion and Testimony of us, which we may labour to preserve, though we have lost the Favour of our Prince; but we must not unseasonably magnify and extol our Innocence, how clear soever, that it may lay any Aspersions upon the Honour and Justice of our Prince. The State and Conjunction may be such, that we ought rather to chuse to be thought guilty of all we are charged with, than by a punctual and particular Vindication of our Innocence, expose the Injustice of our Prince in such a manner, that the People may have less Veneration for him than they should have; the Dignity and Reputation of a Prince is of such inestimable Importance to his own Security, and to the Peace and Happiness of the People, that all his Defects and Infirmities are to be covered and concealed, with the same Care that *Shem* and *Japhet* covered their Father's Nakedness, without beholding it. Speaking Truth in those Cases hath more Malice in it than Lying; and it is a very ill Justification to say, that nothing is published but what was done; when the doing was not good, yet the publishing much worse. He that stands in awe enough of God's Word, and hath a Duty proportionable to his Obligation, will retain his Innocence without blemish, and leave the Manifestation and Vindication of it to such a Season as Providence shall offer, and that it be not lessen'd in the manner of making it appear; and in order to this necessary Caution, we are not to beware of any Temptation more, than that which is offered by the lying Distinctions, and Determinations of those, who are ready to define how long our Duty is to continue under Persecution towards those who persecute, and to set up one Part of God's Word to contradict or enervate another. Let *Saul* persecute never so unreasonably, never so unjustly, *David* will manifest his Innocence no other way than by his Absence, and leave the Time and Circumstances of his Deliverance to him who kept him innocent. *A just Man falleth seven times*, says *Solomon*; * and therefore he had need be seven times a Day at his Prayers, that he may not fall; the danger of often falling requires often Praying, frequent Meditation and Animadversion upon what God hath commanded, and what he hath forbidden us to do; which will give us Peace in the most bloody War, and Quiet in the most raging Storms; and we shall enjoy this Peace and Quiet the better, if we do believe that they who by forfeiture of their Innocence have justly drawn the most severe Prosecution and Affliction upon themselves, do not stand more in need of God's Assistance and Direction to be freed from that insupportable Calamity, than the most upright and innocent Man under the most unjust Oppression and Persecution doth, that he may not fall from or misbehave himself in his Innocence and Integrity.

O Lord, thy Laws are from everlasting to everlasting, and cannot be dispensed with: Thou hast enjoined us to be dutiful and obedient to Kings and Princes, who are established by thee to govern over us; and therefore suffer us never to believe that we may swerve from that

* Prov. xxiv. 16.

that thy Commandment, upon any Pretence or Evidence that they swerve from that Rule which thou hast directed them to govern by: Reprove or punish that their Transgression, when, and in such manner as in thy Wisdom thou dost think fit; but suffer not us, for any Oppression or Persecution they can afflict us with, to rebel or so much as to murmur against them; but give us Grace still, with the more Circumspection and Reverence to love them, to pray for them, and supplicate unto them, without any Diminution in our Affection, because we stand in awe of thy Word. Amen.

(xxii.)

THERE can be no want of Religion, but where there is want of Understanding: It was *the Fool* that said in his Heart there is no God; and he must be more a Fool, that says there is one, and will not do what he commands. *Solomon* knew well what he asked, when he ask'd Wisdom, which would easily supply him with whatever he could stand in need of. We seldom offend one another, provoke each other by Discourtesies and Injuries, but by defect of our Understanding, by not considering; which is a temporary not knowing what we do, and what we ought to do. Alas! our Understanding is easily lost; our Excesses bereave us of it, and our Anger drives it from us, our Lust masters it; but still we must make ourselves Fools before we can be resolutely wicked. And therefore we ought in the first Place, to labour and pray for Understanding; and that we may keep that Understanding when we have it, that it may not be stolen from us, by Peace, and Plenty, and Pleasure; which persuade us that we stand not in need of it, and that the Centrys may securely sleep, when there is no Enemy at any distance; and that we may not be baffled out of it by bold and confident Scoffers, who take upon them to determine and declare that the Esteem of the true Wisdom, which is Religion, proceeds from want of Understanding; and so would persuade us to become Fools, that we may have good Understandings. When the Philosopher could undervalue this World, in comparison of the Fame and Reputation that Men were to enjoy after they had lived in it, *Exiguum nobis vitæ curriculum natura circumscriptis, immensum gloriæ*; when Consideration of what would be said of him after he was dead, made him the more wary how he lived; a little Understanding must make us, who know any thing of Eternity, have a very small Esteem of this Life, or any thing we can enjoy in it, that may lessen our Glory in the next. They who are without this Understanding; have no mind to have it, for they may have it for asking, God gives it to those who desire it. An Affection for and an Inclination to Religion, always obtains this Understanding; and this Understanding improves that Affection, and makes Religion the whole Joy of the Heart, that it can delight in nothing else but Acts of Piety and Acts of Devotion, talks of nothing but the Goodness and Mercy of God, and teaches others how to profit themselves in the same Contemplations: They look only upon those Things with Pleasure which conduce to their Salvation, and tremble at any thing which may interrupt or disturb their Journey thither. And yet God is not so severe as to exclude all Men from this Understanding, who for a Time have departed from it, after they have had it. A good Sheep may go astray and wander, if the Shepherd's Eye

be not upon him; be led by Curiosity into dangerous Places, and take delight in those Pastures which do not yield good Nourishment; he may by Negligence and Inadvertency wander into those Paths which are frequented by the Wolf and the Fox, and be so lost that he may be thought to be made a Prey to those devouring Beasts; to be swallowed up by his inordinate Passions and brutish Appetites; and yet this lost Sheep may not only be worth receiving again, if he returns, but worth the best Diligence and Enquiry of the Shepherd to find him out, and when he hath sought him, to be cherished with Tenderneſs, and he may then prove the best of the Flock. The best Men would be in a very ill Condition, if being out of the Way should be so severely punished, as never to be admitted into it again; and that because they have once failed in their Understanding, they should ever be deprived of it. He is best who hath fewest Faults, there is none who is without any; and it hath pleased God to make some who have gone farthest astray, and been irrecoverably lost from Mans Enquiry or Expectation, the most signal and glorious Examples for the Advancement of Piety and Religion. He who wanders upon the Confidence that he will return, is in most danger of being lost for ever, because he renounced his Understanding, when it was ready to direct him. There is a great Difference between our total forgetting our Obligation to God Almighty, and not remembering it enough.

O Lord God, though thy Commandments are easy to be understood, and we do the best we can to obey them; yet we have always need to cry to thee for Help, and for the mending our Understanding, that we may as well know how to do, as what to do. We do every Day go astray and wander, and it is thy Goodness, and not any Vigilance of our own, that keeps us from being every Day so lost, as never to return to thy Fold again. O thou preserving Shepherd of our Souls, awake us when we sleep, and seek us out, even when we have no mind to be found; rouse us out of our Lethargy, and suffer us not to forget the Salvation of our Souls, for which so great a Ransom hath been paid by thy own Son. Amen.

PSALM CXX.

THE greatest Prince in the World is subject to the Tongue of his meanest Vassal; and sometimes, after he hath subdued his Enemies abroad by War, and suppressed all Rebellions at Home, he finds himself assaulted by the lying Lips and backbiting Tongues of his own Subjects, more to the endangering his Peace and Quiet, than ever he apprehended from their Arms in War. *Thou shalt be hid from the Scourge of the Tongue*, is reckoned, in *Job*, * amongst the Acts of God's Omnipotency in the Protection of those he favours; as if it were a more supreme Degree of his Power, than his Deliverance from Famine, War, or Death, and much easier to escape those than this. Indeed, the Tongue hath so many Ways of doing Mischief, so much Art to wound, that no Man can put himself into a secure Posture of Defence against it, nor without the immediate Shelter of God himself be defended from it. The provoking and reviling Tongue, that gives reproachful Words to a Man's Face, is the most innocent of all; it

disco-

* Job v. 21.

discovers most, and therefore is like to conceal least of its Malice; and Patience, however moved, may condemn it, and by fair Answers vindicate itself: But the lying, slandering, calumniating Tongue, that strikes in the dark, and cannot be seen, wounds him that is best guarded, almost to Death, before he feels it, and exposes the Honour of the most unspotted Person to the foulest Infamy; is that which kindles Jealousy between Friends, raises Contentions and Animosities in private Families, and kindles a Fire that consumes Cities and Kingdoms; it traduces Magistrates, wounds Kings themselves in their greatest Glory, and with more licence, because no Laws can be made subtile and strong enough to restrain it. *A backbiting Tongue hath cast out virtuous Women, and deprived them of their Labours; Whoso hearkeneth unto it, shall never find rest, and never dwell quietly: The Strokes of the Whip maketh Marks in the Flesh, but the Stroke of the Tongue breaketh the Bone,* says the Son of Syrach.* Chastity, which is the Salvation of Women, is violated by the rude and false Tongue of a licentious Person, as if it were deflowered; and let what Vindication soever be made, it seldom recovers its primitive Lustre. The confidence of a Lie makes commonly so loud a Noise, that it is no more in our Power not to hear it, than not to hear a tempestuous Wind, or Thunder itself; and hear it we may, we cannot discountenance it, not make it odious without hearing it; but who hearkens unto it never finds rest, we must not listen to it so much as out of Curiosity, much less cherish it so far as to be inquisitive into it, though it concerns the Reputation of one whom we cannot love; such Curiosity of the Ear, is often recompenced with some Infusion that takes away his own Rest; and where the Violence of other Blows may often fetch Blood, which is easily stanch'd and wiped off, this of the Tongue breaketh the Bone, maims, if it doth not kill. Lyes have a Contagion that cannot be inclosed with the Lyar, nor confined only to operate upon those who have the same corrupt Inclinations and Dispositions; but infects the most sincere Hearts, and raises Prejudice against the most sincere Persons; the clearest Integrity of the most upright Judge, the greatest Courage of the most successful General, and the most manifest Religion of the most pious and devout Prince, have not only been traduced, but clouded and eclipsed by those Mists and Fogs which false and wicked Men have raised by their Reports and odious Calumnies; so that both Kings, and Generals, and Magistrates, are often compelled to fly to God for Succour, and quietly to shelter themselves under his Wings, till he pleases to scatter those Clouds of Conspiracy, and by the Light of his Discovery make their Virtue and their Innocence appear: He, and he only, can hide us from the Scourge of the Tongue, or wipe out the Marks of that Scourge, and deliver us from all devouring Words.

There is yet a Tongue that is worse, much more dangerous, than this rude, lying, calumniating Tongue; there may be some Resistance and Defence made against that, upon what Disadvantage soever; and though after Wounds received, a virtuous and true Tongue may make War against the other false one, and repair some of the Breaches it hath made, and possibly conquer it to Silence and Submission and Recantation; though that never amounts to Reparation, it being a natural and just Curse on a lying Tongue, that after its Conviction, it is never believed when it speaks Truth. But the insinuating, deceitful, and dissembling Tongue, is much more pernicious, does much more Harm. There is a kind of Plain-Dealing which is commendable in the other, that does no more Mischief than it pretends to do, and shews all the Malice
it

* Eccl. xxviii. 15, 16, 17.

it hath; but a dissembling Tongue acts Truth and Sincerity so much to the Life, that it is rarely discovered, but by the fatal and mortal Effects, when it hath finished its full Operation. *The Words of his Mouth were smoother than Butter, but War was in his Heart; his Words were softer than Oil, yet they were drawn Swords,* was the sad Complaint of the same kingly Prophet, * who now prays to be delivered from the lying Lips, as well as from the deceitful Tongue; he had received a later Assault from the former, and so the Pain of the latter was less felt, though it had been more pungent. Dissembling, is lying in a Vizard, stabbing with a dark Lanthorn, undiscovered. He who practises it, makes himself as like those whom he intends to deceive, as is possible, contradicts them in nothing, and says all that they say, and so much worse, that he may be thought to have learned of them, and make himself acceptable by all that kind of Application which is most like to prevail upon him whom he intends to destroy. If his Design be to raise a Jealousy, and to break a long contracted Friendship, he begins by commending and admiring the Person of him against whom his Malice is levelled; he discovers some good Quality in him, that may make him preferable to the other, and discovers some Ambition in him of some Place his Friend affects, which he seems to lament, and blame as a Breach of Friendship. If he would dispose a Man to somewhat he thinks may do him the Harm he desires, he makes such Arguments against it, as may most incline him to it, and finds some Convenience in it which is more valuable than all the Arguments he hath used to dissuade it. He whispers to be but half heard, and speaks in Fractions, leaving that unsaid which he knows cannot but be conceived and concluded. The Art of Dissimulation is introduced into the World, as another Judgment, like that at *Babel*, to confound the Language thereof, and that Men may not understand each other, not know what they mean by what they say; but it is so much the worse, that it is a Judgment of Mans own bringing, in which God hath no Hand, who loves Truth and Simplicity of Dealing, and would have Men be what they appear to be: whereas now the greatest Skill is to disguise himself in Words, that he may be thought to intend what he least thinks of; and he who is most grossly couzen'd and deceived, must be thought only to be overwitted.

As bad as this Tongue is, there is yet a worse; which though it be deceitful too, is of an Allay that pierces deeper, and the Poison of it is neither to be prevented, nor remedied, and that is the flattering Tongue. The Liar is in time discovered, and loses all Credit, and how much Mischief forever he hath done, he can do no more; and when the Dissembler is enough known, though it be long first, he is without farther Belief, and they who have been deceived by him, communicate his Devices and all his foul Practices, that other Men may beware of him; he hath purchased to himself the Brand of a Knave, which makes him generally abhorred and avoided: But the fawning, flattering Tongue gets Entrance every where, and when it is apprehended, hath the more Liberty; and he who receives most Hurt by it, never discovers it to another, nor takes the more Care himself. There is scarce any Flattery so gross and palpable, that doth not find some Acceptation; and if the Modesty of Standers-by makes it so discernible that it looks out of Countenance, it is quickly renewed again with better Success. *Eo enim dementia venimus, ut qui parce adulatur pro maligno sit,* was the Observation of the Philosopher, who knew the Heart and the Nature of Man, as well as any Man who hath succeeded him. Though it be the
greatest

* Psal. lv. 21.

greatest Blemish and Contradiction of Friendship, it makes itself so like it, that it exceeds, in all those Offices which make Friendship most grateful; and let it do what Mischief it will, it is never complained of: *Apertis & propitiis auribus recipitur, eo ipso gratiosa quo ledit*, the more Hurt it does, the more Welcome. No Man ever owned himself to be a Flatterer, and most Men pretend to detest being flattered; yet they find a Way so far to gratify one another, that the very Man who is at first contemned for his Flattery, oftentimes makes himself received and esteemed, and cherished by the other, without any other Virtue: And *Seneca's* own Friend *Gallio*, who of all Men was taken notice of to abhor it, could find no other Fence against it, but when any Man made the least Approach towards commending any thing he did, *pedes abstulit*, he got out of his Company as soon as possible, without answering or speaking a Word. What Antidote can expel that Poison that is administered in Oil? These are the Crafts and Stratagems of the Tongue, that put the Spirit of God itself to an Interrogatory, *What shall be given unto thee, or what shall be done unto thee, thou false Tongue?* As if it were a hard Thing to inflict a Punishment upon it, equal to its Merit and Wickedness. All the Senses can be punished by Objects, and Contrarieties to what delights them; the Taste may be so disgusted, that it may for ever lose its Relish; and the Eye may be so affrighted with monstrous Objects and Deformities, that it may wish for perfect Blindness: but no Sense is capable of so much Affliction, as the Ear, because it retains its Faculty, and its Vigour is seldom abated with Hearing; and it may be the Invention of Man hath not yet found out a greater Punishment upon pious and conscientious Men, than the condemning them would be, to inhabit perpetually with loose and dissolute Men, and to be compelled to hear what the profane and impious Tongues of wicked and impudent Men do every Day utter.

O Lord, infuse good Thoughts and a Love of Truth into our Hearts, and let our Tongues utter nothing but what is worthy to proceed from such Hearts; make us to abhor all lying, and dissembling, and deceitful Words, and preserve us from any Hurt or Mischief that arises from such Words of other Men; let no malicious Lies find Credit to wound our Reputation, no unjust Calumnies be able to do us Hurt; suffer us never to flatter ourselves, which is the best Preservative against the Flattery of other Men, and let Truth and Sincerity be our Delight, and thy Protection our Refuge. Amen.

PSALM CXXI.

THERE is little Danger from the Attempt of an Enemy to that Fort, which hath its Centinels always awake, to give Notice of the least Approach that threatens its Security; but if the Centinels be asleep, or treacherous, which is all one as to the Discharge of the Trust, nothing more easy than to surprise and destroy it; and though he be commonly the Person that suffers most, the Governour is always most blamed for those Misadventures; the Charge was his, and he ought to have been sure that they he trusted, had been equal to it. We are all trusted with the keeping of a Fort, that will hold out any Assault the Enemy can make upon it, if it be not betrayed by its Centinels; if good Watch be kept that we be

not surpris'd. The Soul of Man, how much threatened soever by the diligent and industrious Enemy of Mankind, is so well fortified, that it can repel any open Assault, resist a barefaced Temptation, and needs fear nothing but a Surprise, the Drowsiness or the Treachery of its Centinels; and that which makes the Loss of it inexcusable, it is in our Power to entertain such a Centinel as neither can or will betray us, or to chuse such who have never performed their Trust well, but have been surpris'd themselves, or conspired with those who make the Assault; and if we will make an Election of such a Guard, as hath been known to be so treacherous, it can proceed from nothing but the undervaluing the Loss, and not caring to keep that which we so easily suffer to be taken from us. If we hearken to those Temptations which usually get in at the Ear, are pleas'd, or not exceedingly displeas'd with profane and unclean Discourses, upon Confidence that they shall make no Impression upon our Manners, tho' they contribute to our Mirth; that Severity and Chastity of the Ear, which is one of the principal Centinels of the Soul, is already vitiated into a Slumber, and will never be startled at the Noise of Blasphemy itself. If we send our Eyes gadding after beautiful and lascivious Objects, upon Imagination that there can be no Danger in satisfying the outward Sense, and only in seeing what we may easily avoid; there is a great Danger that those Eyes will be asleep, or not offended to see those Objects drawn near, and within an unlawful Distance. The seeing *Bathsheba* bathing herself, pleas'd *David's* Eyes so well, that he had reason afterwards to have wish'd they had been out. If we let loose our Affections and Appetites to range where they please, keep what Company they will, and use what Diet they like best, upon Presumption that we can call them home when we please, and restrain them by the Strength of our Reason and Temperance from any immoderate and unlawful Excursions; alas! they are got out of the Reach of our Reason and Temperance, and have more Power to draw us after them, and we have less Inclination to restrain, than to concur with their most impetuous Exorbitances, until our Soul be swallowed up in their Excesses. There remains then no Security, but in a perpetual Distrust and Jealousy of all those false Emisaries, and in depending upon that sure Guardian of our Souls, who knows the Value of them, and what Place he hath provided for their Reception. God himself is ready to take the Charge of them, if we will commit them to him; and he will bring all those unruly Senses and Affections, which we cannot keep within their Bounds, under such Regulation and Discipline, that they shall serve for good Spies and Guards to defend us from any desperate Surprises; he will not suffer us to make any one false Step, upon the Presumption that we can retire without Danger; to expose ourselves to any dangerous Temptation, upon Confidence that we can subdue it: but will keep our Feet steady, from moving out of the Place where they ought to be. He will watch us in all the Sallies of our Life, make our Prosperity wholesome to us under such Reflections upon the Vicissitudes of this World, that they shall, like good and refreshing Shades, shelter us from that Insolence and Pride which the Sunshine of those Seasons usually disposes us to; and he will give us such a comfortable Light in the darkest Night of Adversity, that we shall see some Place to repose us in, when there is no Way visible to lead us out, and will extend that Light to shew us a Way out of it, when he finds it fit that we should be abroad again. But if we expect that God shall take this Care of us upon him, we must repose our whole Trust in him, without reserve; not let loose our Ambition, in hope he will keep it innocent, nor our Appetite,

Appetite, in hope he will keep it moderate. We must remember, that *Jerusalem* is upon a Hill; we can only see God by looking up; he is not to be found in the Vallies of worldly Pleasures and Delights, which still endeavour to hide themselves from his Eye. And if we do pursue those, he can slumber too, let us alone as if we were asleep, and suffer us to sleep out our Time to our own lazy Desire; but then, as we rejected his Providence in our going-out in the Course of our Life, we must not expect his Direction in our coming-in, in the Hour of our Death, in those comfortless Groans which we breathe out upon our sick Beds, but must be left to ourselves, and to the Memory of all that we have done in our Health; which, how weak soever it is to any other Purpose, will very particularly present that Account to us, and be an ill Companion into the other World.

O Lord, to whom can we lift up our Eyes with Comfort, but to Thee, from whom all our Comforts must flow? It is thy Watchfulness only that can preserve and secure us, whether we ourselves wake or sleep; thou art our only Keeper, under whose Shadow we can take both Refreshment and Repose; thou only canst keep us from being elated with Prosperity, with which we are too much pleased, and from being dejected with Adversity, in which we are too much terrified; thy Presence is equally wanted in both, and not so much in any Article of our Life, as at the Hour of our Death. O whatever thou dost think fit to lay upon us before, be propitious to us then, and let us receive Comfort and Assurance from thee when we go out of the World, though we have not taken the Comfort from thee we might have done whilst we are in it. Amen.

PSALM CXXII.

IF we were all carried Captives into a strange Land, where God is not at all known, and such brutish Devotions only are used as are most fit for those Deities whom they adore; as a People hath more than once been, that deserved as well as we have done, and had more reason to believe that they should be exempted from that Calamity than we have; we should be worthy of the Continuance and Increase of that Servitude, if we had not a greater Sense of being deprived of the Liberty of serving God, than of the Liberty of our Persons, or the Possession of our Estates, and a more ardent Desire and Impatience to be restored to the one, than to both the other: We should remember nothing with equal Joy and Delight, as the Time we had spent together in the publick Exercise of Religion, and the Blessings we received from thence; nor would any Thoughts fill our Mind with that Pleasure and Content, as the longing Desire to be restored to that Felicity, for the Felicity itself. These, and such as these, we have reason to believe would be our Reflections in that sad Condition; and those very Meditations are most necessary to preserve us from falling into that Condition. To consider and revolve the End and Use of Religion, the Obligations which are upon us from it; that we cannot love God himself, if we do not love all who serve him; and if we do not do the best we can to induce those to serve him, who are yet out of the Way, at least if we do not take care not to drive them farther out of the Way by our Vices and Example, which are so ill Fruits of Religion, that they may justly suspect, if not condemn the Tree
that

that bears them, that Religion that suffers such Lives; we may be reasonably thought to have read that Part of the Bible that contains the History of the *Jews*, that we may the more exactly transcribe all their Sins in our Practice, and we have acted all their Murmurings, and Perverseness, and Obstinacy to the Life; God's Mercies, and Bounties, and Deliverances, and Miracles, as many almost, and little inferior to what he hath wrought for us, have had the same Operation, and we complain and murmur after all as much as they did; we have already also undergone some of the Judgments that they did, though inflicted upon us by a lighter Hand, in Wars, in Plagues, and in the heaviest Judgments of all, the want of Sense and Remorse upon those Judgments; so that we have upon the Matter, brought God to his old dismal Interrogation, *Why should ye be stricken any more?** Ye will revolt more and more. And after all this, it is yet more wonderful that we should expect another of their Corrections, Captivity under those who know not God. We see the Progress that the Infidels have made in the World, in the Conquest of Kingdoms and Nations; and as if we were Rivals with them in Infidelity, we are their Harbingers, and make Way for their Entrance, by Neglect and Contempt of that which can only keep them out, Christian Religion; and as if it were too strong, and were like to be too prevalent if united, we divide and crumble it into several Factions, infusing into every one more Animosity against each other, than against the common and the most implacable Enemy to all: We care not what Thrones we shake to dissolve Government, and instead of praying for the Peace of *Jerusalem*, we think Peace less necessary there than any where, and enlarge the Rents therein, upon the most trivial Provocation. There cannot be a surer Preface to, and prognostick of a general Captivity and Slavery of a Nation by Conquest, than an Indifference in the Worship of God, and not caring how he is served, or whether he be served at all. It is very strange, that that Peace that makes all Things lovely, should not be thought necessary to adorn the Beauty of Religion. We all acknowledge, that Kingdoms do not enjoy their full Measure of Prosperity, if they do not enjoy Peace; that Peace only can secure that which they have, and supply them with that which they have not; that all other Blessings without it, retain a Bitterness that is unpleasant and ingrateful; and we cannot represent to our Thoughts a nearer Emblem of the Tranquility and Joy in Heaven, than an Imagination of a universal Peace in the World: But there can be no such Imagination, whilst there is no Peace in the Church, no Consent in Religion, which would quickly go very far towards the extinguishing all other Fire of Contention, and if Wars cannot be utterly rooted out, would introduce such a Temper and Magnanimity in carrying them on, that no Body shall be undone, but those who are in the Number of declared Enemies, and suppress all savage Delight in the Calamities of other Men.

O Good God, infuse into our Hearts a true understanding of that Religion which thou hast prescribed to us to walk in; and such a Delight in the Exercise of it, that we may apprehend no Calamity that can befall us, not Captivity itself, with more Trouble and Consternation, than as it may remove us from that Exercise, and from those who are pleased with it. Thou who dost settle the Thrones of Kings and Princes, by their Love of Justice and Religion, reconcile them to a Love of Peace and Unity in Religion; let Peace be within the Walls of thy Church, that Prosperity may be within their Palaces. Amen.

* Isaiah i. 5.

PSALM CXXIII.

THEY who have with very signal Patience behaved themselves well under a great Persecution, undergone Adversity with Courage enough, have not found so great Difficulty in any Part of it, as when they have met with the Contempt of proud Standers-by; when they who have had no Hand in bringing their Afflictions upon them, have out of the Haughtiness of their Natures derided them for being in Affliction, and insulted upon their Misfortunes, only because they are unfortunate. Few Men are so well composed under any great Sufferings, which they are best prepared to undergo, as not to feel a Neglect and Contempt which proceeds from the Wantonness of Ease and Plenty, and from the Pride of those who despise them for being miserable. *David* himself, after he had submitted to the unjust Rage and Persecution of *Saul*, and preserved himself by Flight, and after he had so far convinced him of his Innocence, by shewing him the Skirt of his Garment, that he almost converted him, was not able to bear the churlish Contempt of *Nabal*, in refusing to give him what it was lawful for him to deny; but was so far transported with the Indignity, that his Passion carried him to the very Brink of Murther, when he was restrain'd by the soft Entreaty of a discreet Woman, which in the Instant prevail'd over him, and made him retain his Innocence, and acknowledge that God himself had sent her to preserve him. We have never more need of the immediate Influence of God's Spirit, than in such Assaults, when those who oppress us add Contempt and Scorn to their Injustice, and when the Spectators of our Misery take occasion from thence to deride and despise our Persons; nor can any thing preserve us, in those Cases, from some unwarrantable Excurfions, but the casting up our Eyes unto the Hand from whence those Strokes come, and concluding, that as the Weight of the Affliction comes from God upon us, so every Circumstance that accompanies it in the proud and disdainful Smiles of Men, or in the louder Reproaches of those who are delighted in what we suffer, are sent likewise by him to increase our Mortification, and to try whether we can master those lesser unwary Passions, as well as conform ourselves in the more weighty and deliberate Temptations: *Because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David, who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?* * was a Recollection of that devout Prince, strong enough to restrain the Son of *Zerujah* from taking Vengeance upon *Shimei*, in the Article of his insolent cursing the King. If in the Scoffs and Derision of our Enemies, who make themselves Sport at our Calamities, we did revolve that every Insolence of theirs, every unsavory Jest they break upon us to render us more contemptible to those who behold us, are so many Emissaries of his to visit us, and inform him how we behave ourselves in those Provocations; we should be better prepared for their Reception, and drive away all their Pride and Insolence with a Contempt that would both disappoint and incense them, and turn the Edge and Rancour of their own Weapons upon themselves, and make them penetrate their own Souls, because they could not pierce ours. And it is for want only of this Recollection, of this diligent Attention and Submission to the Hand of divine Providence, that our Passions too often prevail upon us; and when the Power and Menaces of our Superiors have not been able to terrify us from doing our Duties, the scurrilous Jests and impudent Revilings

8 Y

of

* 2 Sam. xvi. 10.

of our Equals, or Inferiors, have made us to be less in Love with our Innocence, and even ready to sacrifice that to indecent Murmur, or to our avowed Anger and Revenge.

O Lord God, since the lowest and meanest Servants have not so much need of the Favour and Kindness of their Masters, as we have of thy Protection, let not the Duty and Observance of any Servants be comparable to our Diligence in observing all thy Directions, and to our Obedience to all thy Commands. We live in an Age, and in a Nation, full of Pride and Oppression, and where they who are oppressed, are commonly contemned and despised; let not the Blasts of that Contempt shake us, or grieve us, nor the Reproaches of guilty Men make us weary of our Innocence, or terrify us out of it; but raise our Spirits to condemn that Contempt, and to despise that Pride that despises us, Amen.

PSALM CXXIV.

TH^O' the smallest Benefit or Convenience that can befall us, is conferred upon us by God himself, as every Misfortune or Affliction that happens flows from the same Fountain; yet we are not apt to look upon either as proceeding from him, if we can apprehend any other Cause from whence to derive it; if there be a Friend that could contribute to the first, or an Enemy who is pleased with the other, we think of no other Original of either. It must be a Deliverance of such a Magnitude, and all the Circumstances of it so extraordinary, that can admit no Sharer, all our own Stratagems must have failed us, and all the Promises and Endeavours of Friends must have appeared frustrate, before we can discern and confess the Hand of Heaven to reach us any thing we are delighted with; and it is very well, if, upon such a Manifestation and Conviction, we do bring ourselves to such an Acknowledgment, as may make us worthy of the Obligation: which if we do not do, we were much better to have imputed it to any Chance or Accident, than to the Purpose and Designation of Providence. When a great and flourishing Nation is reduced to so great Straits, that its natural Prince, who should protect them, is himself oppressed, and become a banished Person; when all their Laws and Liberties are trod under foot by a powerful and impious Usurper; and all Persons who are able to give Relief, instead of endeavouring it, enter into Treaties and Combinations to support him; when Religion is made a Property of, to destroy God's Service, and to introduce Profaneness, Sacrilege and Atheism, and the Hearts and Spirits of all Men are so cast down, that they think it a Hope too great for Faith itself to entertain, that there can be any Resource from that destroying Calamity: If, after all this, the same Hands which demolished this goodly Pile of Government, shall apply their Strength to the setting it up again; if a naked, banished, neglected Prince, without Friends or Arms, shall prevail with those who conquered him, to lay those Arms at his Feet, and to employ them contrary to their own Purposes and Desires, to establish what he thinks fit, and which they themselves have no mind to submit to; if a hundred Contradictions unite themselves for the Support and Propagation of what they take no Delight in, mutually strive to bring that to pass, which being effected they know must destroy all that is dear to either of them; if a contemned, dead and buried Church shall hold

hold up its Head again, and rise out of its Dust and Ashes with Beauty and Vigour, shall infuse new Spirits into her Children, till they grow strong enough to suppress their Adversaries, and ascend out of Prisons to Tribunals to judge those who imprisoned them, and by no other Laws but those to which they were all to be subject : When this wonderful Case falls out, and no Human Aid in View that can contribute to it, it is not possible that any Beholder of it shall not confess that God himself, and none but he, hath brought this Miracle to pass. *If it had not been the Lord who was on our Side, now may Israel say; If it had not been the Lord who was on our Side, now may England say:* Nor doth the *Psalm* seem to be a more proper Thanksgiving and Acknowledgment for that People than for this, who in the Sight of all the World hath not been less miraculously delivered than the other. Never People was so wonderfully ransomed from Captivity, when they were even swallowed up! never Church was more extraordinarily redeemed from Rapine, Ignorance, and Sacrilege! and never Prince was more miraculously rescued and restored from Reproach and Infamy, and exalted to the full Honour of his Progenitors! And if all three, in their several Stations, do not celebrate their Deliverance and Redemption with that Gratitude and Devotion, which God cannot but expect from every one of them, they will have reason to expect such a Return of Misery and Desolation, as befel the Children of *Israel* after this Psalm, for their signal Ingratitude.

O Lord, thou hast preserved us from the very Brink of Despair, and snatched us from the Teeth of our Enemies, when they were ready to devour us; when there was no Help or Hope in view, thou hast, with the Strength of thy own Arm, pulled us out of their Hands: Work another Miracle, we beseech thee, upon us, by infusing so much Grace into our Hearts, that we may have this Deliverance always before our Eyes; and more abhor any Temptation to displease thee, than the Misery from which thou hast recovered us.

PSALM CXXV.

IF Men would deal justly and faithfully with themselves, they might easily know whether they do in truth repose their entire Trust in God, which all Men pretend to do; or whether they do not trust in themselves or some other Man more, which most Men do, and none professes to do: And the Inquisition is the more necessary to be made, because it is possible for a good Man to believe, or rather imagine, that he doth put his Trust in God, when indeed he is far from it. Though he uses some Inventions of his own, and depends upon the Power of his Friends to procure some Benefit and Advantage for him which he affects, yet his chief Confidence is in God, that he will bless his Inventions, and assist his Friends in compassing what they endeavour for him; without which, he well knows that neither the one or the other can be effectual to him: and yet all this while his own Stratagems are very corrupt and unlawful, and the Offices he expects from his Friends are Offices of Injustice, that they will oppose and oppress those who are his Rivals, though much worthier than himself, and commend and magnify him above the others, against the Obligations of Truth and Sincerity; and he persuades himself that his Trust is in God Almighty, because he hopes that he will bless the Means he hath used to compass it :
when

when Thieves may as well say and believe that they depend principally upon Providence to bring some good Booty in their Way, which they intend to make themselves Masters of by Violence and Rapine. It is very true, God doth not accept such a lazy, counterfeit Dependence upon him, as is destitute of any honest Endeavours and Industry for ourselves; but he doth much more abhor that we should expect a Blessing from him upon our crooked and perverse and malicious Designs. It is better to trust wholly in ourselves, and not so much as to think of him, than to imagine that he will favour and bear a Part in crowning any wicked or unjust Means with Success, except it be in order to our farther Condemnation. If we do rely upon a Blessing from him, we must use those Means of Industry and Integrity, which he uses to bless, and never make one false Step into those Ways, which he declares himself to be an Enemy to. But the clearest and most unquestionable Manifestation that we do put our Trust in the Lord, is our Steadiness and Constancy in and to his Precepts; that no Allurements and Invitations of Pleasure and Profit, no Apprehensions of Terror and Misery and Calamity, can persuade us in the least Degree to swerve from them, in order to compass the one, or to avoid the other; and the surest Evidence that he doth accept this our Trust in him, is, when he blesses this our Constancy, and makes us, as it were, as unmoveable as himself; and as he cannot fail, or be shaken in his Resolutions towards us, so we cannot be shaken in our Confidence in him, nor misled by that Confidence. If he sends us such a Prosperity as makes our Lives pleasant to us, we will have Confidence still in him, but not in that Prosperity; which may be as well an Instance of his Jealousy, as of his Love, and therefore we cannot entertain it with too much Jealousy and Apprehension. If he thinks fit to exercise us under a severe Affliction, we will conclude that it is the wholsomer Diet of the two, and least dangerous to our Constitution; and will so cultivate the Mortification, that it shall bear better Fruit than the warmer Season of our Plenty had done. We do know that we are not they upon whom the Rod of his Chastisement is to take its rest, but that it will pass from us to them with whom it is to dwell; that God hath so much Knowledge of and Compassion for the Frailty of Human Nature, and the deep Impression which unlimited Persecution and Oppression makes upon the Minds, and even upon the Integrity of Mankind, that he restrains it within such Limits, that they may prove Remembrancers and Incitements to us of our Duty, not extinguish that Fire which must enliven it. Adversity is the Reprehension and Punishment he inflicts upon those for whom he hath reserved large Portions of Felicity and Contentment; but it is his Vengeance upon those, who have declined the strait and direct Line which he directed them to walk by, in hope to find out a crooked Path that would with more Expedition conduct them to the End they would be at.

O Lord, fix our Hearts so much upon thee, that our Eyes may never be delighted with any Object that may alienate our Affections from thee, or may make us less fit to be affected by thee. Make us to know and remember, that how prosperous soever wicked Men may seem for a Time to be, yet that thou never dost real Good to any, but to those who are good, and who desire to please thee; and that every thing that taketh not its Root from thee, can never yield any solid Delight or Comfort, but shall pass away as a Dream, and leave no Remembrance of it behind. Amen.

PSALM CXXVI.

Whatsoever comes suddenly and without Expectation upon us, whether good or bad, doth equally surprize and disorder the Spirits and Faculties of Man; nor have any sudden Accidents of Grief and Sorrow had more fatal Effects, than those of Joy have had: so that in truth our Temper and Constitution is better prepared and disposed to bear a moderate Proportion of either Fortune, than an Excess of either; and we are as easily cloyed with Prosperity, as afflicted with Adversity. But we may think that though in the highest Current of Success, the most ambitious Spirit may be surprized with an Honour or Preferment, even above his most confident Expectation or Imagination; yet Men in Misery should be always so awakened and prepared for a Deliverance, that it can never come sooner upon them than they are ready to receive it. That Men who are in Captivity or in Banishment should not always have an Impatience about them for their Liberty and for their Country, is such a Stupidity, that Misery itself cannot naturally produce: but, how impatient soever we are to be delivered, the Circumstances and Manner of that Delivery may be so stupendous, that it may not only carry with it some Amazement, but even a kind of Horror to the most composed Understandings, that Men may be even afraid of their own Deliverance. An *Englishman*, who undergoes a strict Imprisonment in *Spain*, hath impatient Longing enough to be at Liberty in his own Country, and would entertain any rational Means to compass it with abundant Rejoicing; yet he would hardly be composed enough, to find himself in one Night freed from his Thralldom, and possessed of that full Felicity, without knowing how it comes to pass, and would even be afraid of his Liberty, and of his Country. They who languish many Years in neglected Banishment, and have endeavoured all the Ways their Wits can suggest to them to mend their Condition, all which Endeavours have not been only fruitless, but have rendered all future Hopes desperate, are not less confounded than their Adversaries are, to find their Redemption come in a Moment, when they least thought of it, with the same Velocity as the Rivers run in the South. When they find themselves repossessed of their Liberty, of their Country, of their Estates, it is no wonder if they do not quickly believe their own Senses, nor give Credit to what they are sure of, but take some time to lie awake, that they may be very sure that they dream not. Such an Unaptness to be confident of what they see and feel, is an Effect of that Extasy of Joy which God is well pleased should possess us, when he works such Wonders and Miracles for us; and when all the World is amazed, it will become us to be amazed too; and our Slowness to believe shall not be imputed to us, if when there is no more room to doubt of our own compleat Happiness, how extraordinary soever, our Hearts be proportionably enlarged with true Gratitude and Acknowledgement of his Bounty, and with devout Vows to expiate all those Sins and Offences, which had so deeply plunged us under his Displeasure, and made us undergo those Calamities from whence he hath so wonderfully set us free. We shall then take some Pleasure in the Memory of the Tears we have shed, when he hath vouchsafed to wipe them dry from our Eyes, and of the sharpest of those Sufferings and Calamities for which he hath made us such abundant and extraordinary Recompence.

O Lord God, we need not go far to enquire what this People is, which thou didst so surprise with a prodigious Deliverance, which made all Nations say one amongst another, The Lord hath done great Things for them. We are the very People ourselves, and must ever confess that thou hast done those great Things for us, whereof we are glad. We do not forget the Confusion we were in, when we rather believed that we did dream, than that we were really set free from the Captivity we had undergone. We do remember the Laughter of our Mouths, and the Singing of our Tongues, and the Noise which the Joys of our Hearts then made. O let us remember likewise the Vows we then made to thee, the true Gratitude our Hearts then were possessed with, and let us never appear less worthy of thy Protection. Amen.

PSALM CXXVII.

BELLARMIN professes that this *Psalm* is so very hard and obscure, that after he had taken all the Pains he could to understand it, he could not comprehend what the Meaning of it was; and they who consult his Commentary upon it, will indeed not the better be able to understand it. He, as some of the Fathers before, was so desirous always to find a figurative and mystical Sense in all the *Psalms*, and that all Things should refer to the Church, or our Saviour, that he little considered the literal Sense of the Words, and so hath perplexed this short *Psalm* with Notions which give very little Light to the Darkness which he supposes to be in it. Whereas we may lawfully, and more usefully believe, that the greatest Part of those Devotions were composed by the *Psalmist*, upon the several Actions and Occasions of his Life, and the Distresses himself had been in, without making use of his prophetick Spirit so often as he is thought to have done; and it may be, to prevent many of those Calamities by a seasonable Performance of their Acknowledgments and Duty by the People, than that he either foresaw the Time, or the Measure of those Calamities; and without declining the very literal and natural Meaning of this Text, we may fall upon those Reflections, which might very well at that Time have been the Subject of *David's* own Recollections, as they cannot but be of our daily Observations and Experience. All the Pains and Industry Men can use, to how warrantable Ends soever, can never compass and bring those Ends to pass, without some extraordinary Concurrency, and signal Benediction of Divine Providence upon those Endeavours. We may labour to raise a Name to ourselves, and to establish a Family to inherit and propagate that Name, and at Ease to enjoy that Plenty and Pleasure which our Sweat and broken Sleep have purchased for them: Alas! how often have we seen such proud and lofty Structures demolished in much less Time than they were raised! *David* had seen God take the Pains to raise the Family of *Saul* to the greatest Heighth, and suffered it to fall again in his own Sight, into its primitive Obscurity. Nay, God many times contributes so much to our Ambition, and confirms our Hopes of leaving a lasting Family behind us so far, as to give us an ample Issue, as so many Pillars to support our Family; which is as great a Blessing as we can pray for in this World, and as great a Testimony and Pledge of his Loving-kindness towards us. Children are the Strength and Glory of their Parents, the Comfort and

Secu-

Security of their Age, which keeps their Enemies at a Bay, that they dare not approach to hurt them; and yet *David* had his Quiver full of those Arrows, and found not himself the stronger, or the safer by it. Some of them were Thorns in his Sides, and gave him cause to wish he had been childless. We may reasonably believe that the unnatural Lust, the Murther and Rebellion in his own Children, more perplexed and pierced his Royal and devout Heart, than all the Malice and Persecution of *Saul* had ever done. Families cannot be continued without a Succession of Children, and therefore we may justly pray for them, and receive them as the greatest Blessings, and most lively Evidence that God is inclined to let our Names live upon the Earth; but then the Grief that arises from ill Children, is a greater Corrosive, than the Comfort of Good is a Cordial; and if they are unnatural towards us, whilst we are alive, or unnatural to one another when we are dead, or false to the Prince under whose Protection they live, they are sure to be a more expedite Destruction to the Family we would preserve, than all the Power and Malice of our Enemies can be; and therefore, when we have done all we can, as we cannot have those Children but by God's Bounty, by his Gift, so we must depend upon him, that he will make them good Children, and fix their Hearts upon him: which can only make their Family last, and without which Barrenness had been much preferable to an unblest Fruitfulness.

GRACIOUS Father, nothing we can do for ourselves can make us happy, except thou dost bless what we do; nor nothing thou canst do for us, except thou continue thy Blessings upon us. We do acknowledge that the Children thou hast vouchsafed to give us, are great Testimonies of thy Goodness towards us; and we must humbly beseech thee not to deprive us of any Part of that thy Bounty: but above all, we beg and implore thy Blessings for, and upon them, that their Hearts may be intire to thee; that so we may never be sorry for, or ashamed of those thy great Blessings. Amen.

PSALM CXXVIII.

TO have all the Happiness this World can afford, Plenty of Fortune, and to enjoy that Plenty, which all who have it do not do; to have a chaste and fruitful Wife, (which is always the Gift of Heaven) and not only many Children, (which for the Hope they administer, are great Blessings) but good and excellent Children, who shall be a Comfort to us whilst we live, and propagate our Name from Generation to Generation, is a very great Reward for so little a Price as the Fear of him, who gives all this Reward, amounts to; which may seem to be so easy a Tribute, that it is not in our Power not to pay; and so all the Happiness we can wish comes to us at an easy rate; God himself being so full of Majesty and Terror, that the most bold and impudent Sinner fears and trembles at the least Evidence of his Presence; so that if any proportion of Fear will pay our Ransom, and reconcile him to us, after we have offended him, we have it always about us to expiate his Displeasure. But that kind of Fear will not serve our Turn, nor be attended with such ample Recompence: There is a very great difference between the Fear to offend him, and the Fear of him after he is offended; the first is the Effect of Love, which is so powerful that he can deny it nothing; the

the other is the Effect of Guilt, that dares not come into his Presence, nor hath the Confidence to ask for Pardon: The former walks steadily in the Ways he hath directed, and cannot be tempted out of them by the most inviting Hopes, or the most powerful Menaces; the latter, having unwarily walked out of those Ways, mends his Pace, and gets farther from them, and likes neither those Paths, nor them who tread in them; and flatters himself with a Hope that the farther he is from them, the more he is out of the Distance of God's own Discovery. The Fear of the former is still increased by the Strength and Violence of his Love; the Fear of the latter grows insupportable, because all his Love is extinguished and expired. *The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Knowledge, but Fools despise Wisdom and Instruction*, says Solomon; * they have none of that Fear, because they care not for the Benefit that attends it. If the Wicked could be without Fear, they would think themselves very happy; but they have the full Measure of it, of destroying, distracting, confounding Fears, which always come to pass. *The Fear of the Wicked, it shall come upon him; that which he fears most shall befall him*; † whereas the Fear of the pious and devout Man, is comfortable and nourishing, and drives from him, and secures him from, all the Ill he fears. *The Fear of the Lord is to hate Evil; Pride, and Arrogancy, and the evil Way, and the froward Mouth do I hate*. ‡ And whosoever hates these as much as he ought to do, needs fear nothing else. Love is the natural Parent of Fear, and never was without it. No Man ever loved with a very moderate Passion, who did not exceedingly fear to offend, or displease the Object of his Love; who did not fear that he should not appear worthy to have his Love accepted, or that any Affection that could be returned, could be proportionable to his. Men labour to cultivate this Love all they can, though they find their first Harvest to be abundance of Fears and Apprehensions. And truly, if we do not fear God as we ought to do, that is, hate every thing he hates, and love every thing he loves; if we are not afraid of offending him, and jealous that all our Addresses and Solicitations may not procure that Acceptation from him we desire; if we do not still fear that he will discover some Unworthiness in us, which may alienate his Affection from us; it must proceed from want of Love, which can never be without that Fear: for they that fear the Lord will keep his Commandments: and they who keep his Commandments, will be sure to enjoy all the Blessings of this World, and to have them improved in the next.

O Lord God, since a true and devout Love of thee, which we all pretend to have, cannot subsist without a Reverence of thy Divine Majesty, and an awful Fear to offend thee; and since thou dost reward that Fear with all the good and valuable Things of this World, and crown it with the inestimable Blessings of the next; let that Fear always dwell in our Hearts, that we may fear nothing but displeasing thee, and that thou wilt withdraw thy Favour from us. Make that Fear suppress and extinguish all other Fears, which would else extinguish that; and suffer no Hopes or Fears of this World, of the Profit or Pleasure of it, to lessen that Fear which keeps us obedient to thee, and which thou dost always reward with thy choicest Blessings, Amen.

* Prov. i. 7.

† Prov. x. 24.

‡ Prov. viii. 13.

PSALM CXXIX.

IF proud and wicked Men could be converted or diverted from hating and persecuting those who are just and pious; or if profane Men could be brought to a Love and Reverence of Religion, by the wonderful Examples they have seen of God's defending and vindicating those who have depended upon him, and of his miraculous rescuing his Church, when it hath been upon the Point of being swallowed up by the Rapine and Sacrilege of impious and profane Persons; that Rank of Men would take less Delight in, and be less exalted with the Opportunities they find to exercise their Oppression upon their Neighbours, and with the Occasions they meet with to condemn Religion, and make themselves merry with the Mysteries thereof; and they, whose sad Lot it is to be exposed to the Insolence and Tyranny of the one, or to be acquainted with the Licence of the other, would be less dejected and cast down under those Afflictions, as knowing that they cannot long suffer under the Extremity thereof. God hath frequently, and always will permit ill Men to prevail over those who are much better and more innocent, to grieve and afflict them with their Oppression, and to wound them with their Calumnies; to exercise all manner of Insolence towards them in their Actions and their Words; so that they seem to lie bound at their Feet, to undergo all that their Pride and Malice is inclined to inflict upon them. And when they are both in this Posture of doing, and of suffering, on a sudden he cuts asunder all those Cords of Oppression and Bondage, lets the Sufferers loose; and, that they may be possessed of Liberty and Innocence together, he leaves them not to revenge themselves, to exercise the same Tyranny over those who have formerly oppressed them, and to do as they have been done unto; but he does, by some exemplary Judgment of his own, make them appear odious and miserable to the World; and not only divest them of all Power by which they might do more Mischief, but makes them entirely subject to those whom they have provoked, and to the Reproach of all Strangers. The Wealth which they had hoarded up for their Support in any Change of Fortune, though they feared it not, they find melted away as Butter against the Sun, withered and shrunk into nothing, as that Grass that had never Nourishment but in the most barren Places, and totally consumed before they entered upon the Expence of it. The Friends they had made, by mutual Offices and a Communication of Guilt, by solemn Associations and Engagements to assist each other, and never to depart from one another's Interest, they see sinking in the same Ruins with themselves; or informing against them, to make their own Guilt the less, by increasing the Weight of theirs; and performing all the Acts of Malice to make them odious, which they formerly exercised jointly to destroy those into whose Power they are now committed. They see the true Owners restored to their Habitations, which they were possessed of, and resolved to leave to their own Heirs, who are left to beg their Bread; and, which should affect them more than all the rest, they see those with whom they had dealt most cruelly, and whom they despised as incapable of ever doing Harm or Good to them, live kindly and neighbourly towards them, and to wish nothing so much, as that upon a true and sincere Recollection of what they had done and suffered, they would make such a serious Repentance, as might be acceptable to God Almighty, whose Hand hath been so visible in all that hath befallen them; and who hav-

ing so repaired all the Breaches and Demolitions they had made in his Church, called together all that consecrated Revenue which they had scattered Abroad, that it might be impossible ever to be collected again by or into one Hand, to be applied to the same sacred Use to which it was first dedicated, and having reduced all the Confusion they had so industriously established, into the same Order for his Service which they had disturbed, hath sufficiently manifested that such Combinations are not agreeable to his good Pleasure, and shall always be as unsuccessful to the Undertakers, as theirs have been.

GOOD God, who hast so often manifested thy Care and Protection of those who put their Trust in thee, by wonderful Deliverances of them out of the Hands and Power of those who unmercifully oppress them; make, we most humbly beseech thee, those thy frequent and great Examples operate upon the Hearts of all proud and mischievous Wrong-doers, that they may consider that their Insolence and Injustice will provoke thee to come to the Help of those, whom they think themselves strong enough to oppress; and then that all the Mischief they shall work must return into their own Bosoms, and themselves be made inferior to those over whom they have insulted; and let this Reflection restrain them from the Thought of any such Outrage, and be a Conversion of them to delight in nothing but what may please thee.

PSALM CXXX.

THE greatest Comfort we have, or can have, is, that no Power on Earth can cast us so low, though our own Guilt contributes to the Depth of it, but that he that dwelleth in the Highest will vouchsafe to hear us, if we can cry unto him; he will raise our Voice, how low soever we lie, or let his own Ear descend to hear us, and understand our Supplication. But it is not a perfunctory, customary Call and Cry that will reach his Ear; it must proceed from a true Sense of the desperate Condition we are in, and we must call to him with all our Heart, and all our Soul, that the Strength of our Cry may make it manifest that we have no Hope but in him; one Depth must answer another; it must be a Prayer from the Depth of the Heart that must raise us out of that Depth into which the Wilfulness of our Transgressions hath cast us; and then, though the Multitude of Offenders can be no Mitigation of their Guilt, but may be an Aggravation of their Punishment, it may administer a comfortable Hope to us, that since the Delinquency is so universal, that no Man is able to justify himself by the Performance of what hath been enjoined to him to do, or by abstaining from what hath been expressly inhibited, God will not proceed with that Severity against them, as he may justly do. Since he was pleased to make Mankind for his Delight, and not for the Exercise of his Vengeance, there is too great a Number in the World, of all Degrees, who out of Wilfulness, and Contempt of his Commandments, live so enormous Lives, that it would be a great Mercy to the rest, that they were cut off, whereby they might not infect and corrupt others by their pernicious Examples; but there are none to be found so innocent, as to deserve to be let alone: Too many take the first Opportunity that is offered, yield to the first Temptation to be wicked, whilst others remain innocent for want of Understanding, rather than
of

of Inclination to be carried away by the same Temptation; *Instrumenta illis explicandæ nequitie defunt.* Many who think themselves free from Corruption, know not what they would do, if they had the Office of a Judge. Vices lurk in Men concealed, for want of Occasion to manifest them; and we often see Men very proud and imperious in Preferment, whom before we thought of very exemplary Humility. And all these secret, frozen Inclinations and Dispositions, which cannot break out and shew themselves till they are warm, and cloathed with Honour and Authority, are as visible to him who sees the Thoughts of the Heart, as they can be to other Men when they are produced upon the Stage of the World; and he may, by the Rules of his Justice, as rigorously punish the one as the other; and if he mark our Iniquities in this manner, who shall stand? But our Comfort is, and it is the Comfort of all Comforts, that as he hath prescribed Laws to us to walk by, so he hath prescribed Laws to himself to judge by; and though we do incur and provoke his severest Justice, he will judge us by the Laws of his Mercy, to which he obliges himself, as much as he doth us to the other. By this Law he interprets every hearty Desire and Endeavour of ours, as the Performance of his Will; every struggling with, and resisting of a strong Temptation, the subduing an impetuous Passion, to proceed from the Integrity of the Heart; and if we are surpris'd by a Guilt we were not able to discover, if we heartily repent and lament that Backsliding, and renew our Vows to him by a more exact Foresight and Obedience, his Mercy interprets this Repentance to be a cancelling and blotting out any Remembrance or Record of that our Misdoing, and will suffer it no more to present itself before him, than if it were undone. And by this Law of his unlimited Mercy, he suffers no miserable Soul to be lost, but such as impudently run from him, and renounce all his Clemency, and by reiterated, and premeditated and repeated Wickedness, pull and draw that Justice upon themselves, which he would willingly have delivered them from.

O Lord, thou knowest our Weakness, and our Wilfulness; and that when we cry unto thee to hear us, and to consider our Prayers, we have nothing to say unto thee for ourselves, or in our own Excuse, but that we are full of Iniquity, and that thou art full of Mercy; that we will not appear before thy Justice, because we know that it must condemn us, and that we do appeal to thy Mercy, because thou dost know that it shall acquit us from the grievous Punishment we have deserved. In this Confidence, and only in this Confidence, we wait upon thy Divine Majesty, who out of Compassion of our incorrigible and irrecoverable Infirmities, hast given us a Redeemer able and willing to discharge all the Forfeitures we have made. Amen.

PSALM CXXXI.

AS there is no unrighteous Passion of the Heart, against which God's Judgments are more positively denounced, than against Pride; so there is no Christian Virtue, to which more signal Rewards are promised, than to Humility. *Every one that is proud in Heart, is an Abomination to the Lord; Pride, and Arrogancy, and the evil Way, and the froward Mouth do I hate,* says the Spirit of God himself, in the *Proverbs*. * So that

* Prov. xvi. 5. viii. 13.

that Pride had need be attended with some very great Emoluments, when it is affected under such bitter Comminations and Reproaches. On the contrary, there is no Happiness, no Blessing, that Humility hath not a Title to, and a Promise of: *By Humility, and the Fear of the Lord, are Riches, and Honour, and Life*, says Solomon.* There can be no true Fear of the Lord, where there is no Humility. The proud Man hath too much Confidence in himself, to entertain a Fear of God; whereas the Humble hath no other Fear. *He shall save the humble Person*, says Job;† and if Salvation will not invite us to be humble, we are very sottishly and stupidly besides ourselves. Indeed, it is a Reflection that hath somewhat of Wonder and Terror in it, that when the whole Body of Scripture, the Old and the New Testament, labours in nothing more, seems to be principally intended to subdue Pride, and to root it out of the Heart of Man, and to plant Humility in the place; and all God's Judgments are to humble us; Men yet take very little Pains to shut out and resist Pride, that it may not enter into them, and very much less to invite and entertain Humility. The Doctrine of Humility is so far from being practised, it may be, from being understood, that it is a very hard Matter to find a Man that is humble, and it may be to know him if we did find him. Most Men, how proud soever, disclaim being proud; which shews they do not think well of Pride, how much soever they may affect it: but very few Men so much as profess or own the being humble, and they who profess it, are most without it; which shews that it is not well understood. There is not greater Ambition, more Animosity and Uncharitableness in Courts, upon the Contests and Emulations for Honour and Offices, than there is in Schools, and amongst Scholars, upon Definitions and Consequences. Men will neither change their own Opinions, nor admit that there is any shadow of Truth or Reason in theirs which contradict them, when neither of them can be sure that either is in the right; which is a great Defect of Humility, the Practice whereof would make the Way to Truth much more visible. Men are ashamed to be thought humble, lest Men should be thereby encouraged to be insolent towards them; and they see those who make the greatest Shew of being so, are least acquainted with Humility. The Apostles themselves had much to do, and found it to be a very difficult Work, to discountenance and reform many Things which had a *Shew of Humility*;‡ and from that Time to this, a Shew of and Pretence to Humility, hath covered and countenanced the most unjustifiable and proudest Designs and Contrivances. Hypocrisy doth frequently dress itself so like Humility, that it doth its Mischief before it is discovered. There may be as great Pride in the Heart of a *Capuchin*, as in the Breast of the greatest General of an Army; and nothing is so contrary to true Humility, as the least Evidence of affecting it. It must not have a haughty or a lofty Look, but it need not have a dejected or a down-cast Look; Confidence and Courage may inhabit a Heart possessed with Humility; nor is a Contempt of the World, or a renouncing any Preferment in it, any Manifestation of being humble, for *before Honour is Humility*.§ Humility is the best and the nearest Way to Honour, if you will believe Solomon, and therefore it is not bound to condemn or reject it. The thinking as meanly of ourselves, as our Weakness and Imperfections deserve we should, is a necessary Part of Humility; but to believe those evident Parts which God hath given us, to be less, or worse than another Man's, which seems to all Men inferior to ours, is not an Effect of Humility; which is never blind. If we can forbear thinking proudly of ourselves, and that it is God's only Goodness if we exceed other Men in any thing; if we heartily desire

* Prov. xxii. 4.

† Job xxii. 29.

‡ Coloss. ii. 23.

§ Prov. xv. 33.

desire to do all the Good we can to others; if we do chearfully submit to any Affliction, as that which we think best for us, because God hath laid it upon us; and receive any Blessings he vouchsafes to confer upon us, as his own Bounty, and very much above our Merit; he will bless this Temper of ours into that Humility which he expects and accepts.

GOOD God, correct and subdue all those proud and lofty Thoughts which would persuade us that there is any thing in us which can deserve the least Favour from thee, or that we are better than other Men, because we enjoy some Blessings which they are without. If thou dost vouchsafe to bestow Prosperity upon us, we do acknowledge it thy Bounty, and infinitely above our Merit; and if thou dost afflict us with Loss of Friends, of Fortune, and of Liberty, we do confess that it is much less than our Sins have deserved, and that it is thy great Mercy that we are not absolutely consumed. Accept this our Humility, and preserve us. Amen.

PSALM CXXXII.

NO Impatience is so seasonable, or becomes us so well, as an Impatience to pay, and to perform whatsoever we have promised and vowed to God, not to defer one Minute after it is once in our Power to perform it; Delays and Deferring make us less apt to do it, and renders the Duty itself less acceptable. There are few Men so wicked, who neglect God so much, but that they have in some Article of Danger or Distress, upon some Deliverance or Blessing which they did not look for, made some Promise of future Amendment, to do somewhat in Acknowledgment and Remembrance of it; and if they made haste afterwards to do that, how little soever it were, it would raise a Propensity in them to do somewhat more than they intended; God usually blessing one good Purpose and Inclination with a new Desire to improve it. But we defer doing any thing of this kind, how solemnly soever promised, till another time; and deferring it makes us think it less necessary to be done, until in the End we forget that we ever intended it; and God is willing to forget too, that we did ever intend it, he taking no Pleasure in our doing any thing which we do unwillingly, or negligently. When he gives us an extraordinary Deliverance out of the Hands of our Enemies, redeems us from Imprisonment or Banishment by a Way or Means which our own Invention could never have contrived, it is not in our Power not to have a deep Sense of it; and if we do not defer to make our Acknowledgment, and to offer up our Thanksgiving to him, that Sense will increase, and by degrees make us place all our Dependance upon him, and renounce all Hope but in him, and from our Gratitude, improve our Piety and Devotion. But when we defer the making this Acknowledgment, and prefer the doing somewhat else before it, the Sense of the Obligation decays, and we think the Deliverance not to be so great and extraordinary, as in truth it was; and then that some Wisdom and Courage of our own contributed to it; and, at last, that it was the same that other Men usually have had, which God did rather not hinder than direct; and by these Degrees we easily put both him, and it, out of our Remembrance. We cannot therefore be too impatient to perform our Part, which will make the daily Remembrance of it as pleasant and delightful to us, as the first Surprise was; and we shall believe that God will not put us out of his Care, af-

ter he hath so notoriously manifested his Kindness to us; but that as he hath chosen us out to magnify himself in, so he will continue the same Protection to our Children, and the Generations which shall succeed them, if they shall be instructed to celebrate his Goings, by our constant Duty and Obedience; and so it is in our Power to perpetuate that Deliverance which he hath given to us, to our Posterity after us, by our early and grateful Acknowledgment. This kind of Devotion is improved by the Publickness of it; we may begin it in our Closet by ourselves, but we must carry it to the Church, by communicating it to others, and so make our Acknowledgment as publick as our Deliverance. A Conjunction with good Men is a great Assistance, and adds great Strength to our Prayers; nor doth any thing advance them more, than when the Clergy, whose Intercession we use, are Men of known and confessed Piety and Integrity: nor can God more manifest his Love and good Purposes towards a Nation, and that he resolves to continue to be gracious to them, than when he supplies the Sanctuary, his own House, with Priests cloathed with Salvation, Men of that exemplary Virtue, Wisdom, and Devotion, that draws all other Men to follow them, by the Lustre of their Lives, and corrects and reforms the Vices of other Men, by their own Example, and the Sincerity of their Conversation.

O Lord, let all thy particular Mercies and Deliverances make that Impression in our Hearts, that we may always revolve them in our Memory, and prefer the Acknowledgment of them before all other Things of the World. Make us to delight in Prayer, and in thy House of Prayer; and to believe that thou art more propitious and more present, when we worship thee at that thy Foot-stool, and art well pleased to be served there with Decency and Handsomness, more than we provide for our own Habitations. Bless thy Church with a learned and pious Clergy, that may suppress Vice by the Authority of their Lives, and inform the People how they may please and serve thee. Amen.

PSALM CXXXIII.

IT was the best Way, and that which God thought fit to make use of to disappoint and dissolve a Combination and Conspiracy that was entered into against Heaven itself, by disuniting them, and not suffering them to know what each other intended, by a Confusion of their Language: And there cannot be a more lively Representation of the most inexpressible Beauty and Benefit that is in Unity and Agreement, than by the Uglinefs and Destruction that always waits upon Discord and Dissention. It is the highest Description that *Solomon* could make of a wicked Man, that *he deviseth Mischief continually, he soweth Discord*. And it is one of the *seven Things which the Lord doth hate, and which are an Abomination to him; a false Witness that speaketh Lyes, and him that soweth Discord amongst Brethren*; * it is the most cunning Way the Devil can find out to undermine God Almighty, who established his Creation by Order and Agreement, which preserves every Branch of it in Vigour and Repose, which the Devil watches all Opportunity to shake and disturb, by infusing Anger, Jealousy and Discord, which dissolves the Confidence and Friendship in Families, and between

* Prov. vi. 14—19.

tween private Persons, and shakes the Peace of Kingdoms and Empires, and introduces War, which introduces Rapine, Murther and Confusion; whereas Unity prevents and shuts out all this Mischief, and is so strong and powerful, that if God would suffer a lasting Union in any notorious Wickedness, which he never doth, the World itself would be shaken, and upon the Matter overthrown. It was all the Hope that *David* had left, when his Heart failed him most, and when he most despaired of his Condition, that *Hushai* would be able by his Insinuations to divide *Abolom's* Councils, that they might not be united by *Abithophel*; and this Disunion preserved him. Union is Strength, and Discord is Weakness; the one builds up and establishes, the other pulls down and scatters abroad. There cannot be a greater Evidence and Manifestation that Christianity hath not wrought its Effect upon the Minds and Hearts of Men, than the universal Love of Contention; Men take Pains not to agree, or to be of one Mind, and there is nothing so trivial in Word or Deed, which will not afford an Argument to disagree and to quarrel upon. The Apostle knew that it was no very easy thing, when he commanded us to *study to be quiet*: We must take Pains for it, not suffer ourselves to be provoked, decline all Occasions; he that is moved by the Petulance of other Men, doth not study to be quiet, doth not value Quiet as he ought to do. Let Men pretend what they will, they cannot be Followers of the Apostle, who, instead of studying to be quiet, study and take great Pains to be contentious; read only that they may be enabled to contend, converse only that they may differ, and contend with those with whom they converse, and search all Occasions to quarrel and disunite themselves from other Men. I do not speak of Unity, as it is a Branch or Effect of that Charity which our Saviour commends and enjoins to all who pretend to be his Disciples, or to follow him, *That they love one another*; but of that moral Unity in Conversation, and Affection between Men who live civilly and obligingly one towards another; of that Coherence and Resemblance in Nature and Manners, which usually unites Men in a Delight in one another's Company, and in gratifying one another by contributing to and being concerned for each others just and worthy Pretences; a Union that can be only amongst good Men: and I am persuaded, that the most quarrelsome and contentious Person doth not find half that inward Satisfaction and Content, in the most successful Contention, as the same Man would do in one Month's living quietly, and agreeing with the Men he lives with. Nature is best pleas'd by being at Peace with all Men. In a Word, as Unity and Agreement between Persons who dwell together, is a great Benefit and Refreshment to them all; so it is a Type of the inestimable Joys in the other World, which are described best to our Sense and Conceptions, that there shall be an entire Unity in Affections and Desires, between all who shall dwell there together.

O Heavenly Father, make we beseech thee our frequent Contemplation and Reflection upon the Unity that is in Heaven, and which must possess and be possessed by all who are admitted to dwell there, to have that Impression upon us, that we may more endeavour to have Unity upon Earth, and to love and agree with each other, as we must do when we come to dwell together there. Root out of our Hearts all Inclinations to Uncharitableness, or to unnecessary Contentions; but make us to live here with that mutual Consent and Kindness to each other, that may invite thee to bring us together to live with thee in Unity of Spirit. Amen.

PSALM

PSALM CXXXIV.

IT is a very easy and cheap Recompence for any Benefits we receive, to praise and thank him who confers them upon us; and we look upon him who fails in making this Return, not only as an ungrateful Man: but as brutal, and not worthy of the Name of a Man: And yet this is all the Compensation which God Almighty looks for, for all the Benefits and Blessings which he hath conferred upon us, that we thank him, and praise him, and pray unto him. There is no Man so poor, that is not able to do this; nor any Man so wicked, as to say that he is not willing to do it. It is not only all the Satisfaction he expects and requires for all that he hath done for us, but it is an Advance, and satisfactory Payment for all that he shall do hereafter, and a Security that he will do all that we desire of him. So that whosoever doth not receive what he prays for, may be well assured that he hath not enough thanked and praised him for what he hath received before. This being the Case, and there being so few Men happy and contented, we may reasonably conclude, that it is not so easy a Thing as we think it to be, to praise and thank God as we ought to do; and that all Men do not perform this Duty, who pretend to be willing to do it, and it may be, think they have done it. Indeed, Thanks is not the Language of the Tongue, and yet that must bear a Part in it too, but it is the Voice of the Heart: and why should we think our Heart so ready to acknowledge what it so seldom takes Notice of? It is a very small Part of the Blessings of our Life, which (God knows) we look upon, as coming from Him; the good Turns we receive from others, we do not believe that he hath any Hand in conferring upon us. The inestimable, though unvalued Benefit of Health, we seldom thank God for, but impute it to our Constitution, and our Youth, and it may be to some Wariness of our own, in cherishing it. Who ever gives God Thanks, because Men speak well of him; or acknowledges his good Name, and the Benefits which commonly wait upon it, to be the Effect of his Kindness? It must be a signal Blessing, that makes such a Noise that all the World takes Notice of it, that must awaken us to discern any thing of Divine Providence in it; it must be beyond and beside our Expectation, and even our Imagination, before we entitle God to it; and it is well if we can find in our Hearts to acknowledge it then to Him, with entire Humility and Thanksgiving: Whereas, if we did soberly and exactly revolve how little we are able to do for ourselves, if he did not help and sustain us; and how much less any Body else would do for us, if he did not direct and oblige them to do it; how much it is in the Power of every living Creature to destroy us, and how solicitous we are to destroy ourselves, if his Protection did not restrain both them and ourselves; we should confess that there is not one Minute in the Day in which he doth not preserve us, nor one Minute of the Night in which we ought not to lift up our Hands unto him, in Acknowledgment of what he hath done for us that Night, and in Prayer that he will watch over us till the Morning. It is He, and He alone, that makes the Labour of the Day of Health and Advantage to us; and it is he that gives us pleasant and refreshing Sleeps in the Night, that no Body thanks him for, but imputes to the natural Effect of the Fatigue and Weariness of the Day; but it is He that teaches our Eyes to sleep, and our Eye-lids to slumber, and hinders the Vanity, and Guilt, and Wickedness of the Day, from keeping us
awake

awake in the Night, or tormenting us with dismal and distracting Sleeps; which they would naturally produce, if he did not relieve and compose us. These constant Reflections and Considerations would bring us to such a Habit of thanking, and praising, and praying to God, that there would be no Intermision in his pouring down Blessings upon us; and we should, in this World, accustom ourselves to that Exercise in which we are to spend all our Time in the next, with the Angels, in praising and magnifying his holy Name for all the glorious Things which he hath done.

O Lord God, who dost heap so many Blessings upon us from our Cradle to our Grave, and without which our Cradle would be our Grave; let not the Multitude of them so much confound us, nor the Greatness of them so much amaze us, that we take no Notice of them, but look upon them as coming by Chance, and not by any Appointment of thine. O let not that Stupidity possess our Souls, and deprive thee of the devout Sacrifice of our Praise and Thanksgiving. Awaken and enlighten our Hearts with a true Sense of all thy Favours, that we may Day and Night magnify thy holy Name, and thereby draw down the Continuance of thy Blessings upon us. Amen.

PSALM CXXXV.

IT is the Duty of all the World, and all Things which are in it, to praise and magnify the Lord of the World, him that made the World and all that therein is. Yet he doth not expect the same Proportion of Service from all alike; he expects much more from those who are received and admitted into his Service, than from those who have only some View of him at a Distance: Nor doth he expect the same Returns of Duty from all his Servants, but much more from those who are trusted by him in his House, in his Court, or in his Church; from those who are trusted by him to govern others, and those who are more peculiarly appointed to teach and inform others, than from those inferior People who are to obey and to learn. Princes, in the first Place, because they stand in the best Place of his House; and then Bishops and their Clergy, who have the chief Administration under the other, and the Province to inform and instruct all, are to pay a greater Tribute of Praise and Thanksgiving to God, than the rest of his Servants. They who are his Servants at large, and wear his Livery, all Christians, have an Obligation upon them to propagate their Relation, and make their Master revered and adored by their good Lives, and their good Manners, in the Sight of those who have not heard of his Name, and cannot but admire and love that Government, which teaches and obliges those who are under it, to so worthy and so innocent a Conversation, and so strict an Exercise of Justice towards all Men. It was this Virtue and Excellence of Life, that first advanced Christianity, and spread itself over Nations, and conquered Kingdoms, without any other Force or Authority but of their Persuasion and their Practice; when those unruly Affections, and Passions, and Appetites, which swayed all the rest of the World into prodigious Vices and Impieties, that were odious to their own Nature, and made them abhor one another, were not to be found amongst the Christians, who walked through those Thorns and Briars without being scratched, and would neither provoke others, nor be provoked by them. Men could not but conclude that the Antidote was very sovereign, that expelled such per-

icious and powerful Poison; and were willing to be informed and conducted by those who prescribed nothing to others to do, but what they did themselves more strictly than they enjoined to others; and this was the great Stratagem, that in little more than two hundred Years carried Christian Religion into almost all the Kingdoms and Provinces of the then inhabited World, in many of which Places the Name of Christ is not now known, but under a Stile of Reproach and Scorn. And there cannot be another Reason so truly given, why it hath not been proportionably advanced since the first two or three Hundred Years, which by this Time would have reduced the whole World, though much greater than it is, to the Christian Faith, than that the Lives of the Christians so much discredited their Doctrine, that Men by justly abhorring the one, cared not to be instructed in the other. It were to be wished that the same Exception had not still the same Force and Influence; and that the barbarous Injustice, and Fraud, and Violence, which possesses the Hearts of Christians, did not fright and terrify the *Turks* themselves from receiving and believing that Doctrine, which cannot shut out such Pollutions. Methinks when we see and observe that all prudent and just Men reject and turn away such Servants from their Houses and Relation, as are dissolute and debauched, and notorious for any one Vice and Scandal, thinking it a great Dishonour to them to be the reputed Masters of such licentious Servants; we should at the same time consider, and tremble, what our Saviour will determine of those, who, by assuming a Relation to Him, have frightened so many from entering into his Service, and exposed his Honour to Reproach by their wicked Lives and Behaviour, when they were obliged, by having been admitted into his Service, so to have praised and magnified his Name in their Lives, that his Doctrine might have been embraced for the Effect it had wrought in them.

If we do believe that God expects this Duty from his Servants at large, and who are rather owned than employed by him, and that he will be intolerably offended if his Expectation be not answered; (and we must believe this of him, if we think him as much concerned and jealous for his Honour as we are for ours;) what must he expect from Kings and Princes, who are possessed of the highest, and best Place in his House; whose Station is so much above all others, and so near his own, that he himself calleth them Gods, and requires that all Obedience and Reverence be shewed to them next himself? If they had no other Obligation, what Praise ought they to give, what Thanks and Acknowledgments ought they to make, for the very Superiority he hath assigned to them over and above other Men; for obliging all others, who in their original Creation were equal to them, and might have been preferred before them, to an entire Resignation of themselves to their Power, and to a Submission and Obedience to their Commands? And if they do with any Reflection and Wisdom revolve this Obligation, they will not only magnify God's Goodness in promoting them to so high a Jurisdiction over others; but at the same time piously consider that he expects another kind of Retribution from them, than from those who are subjected by him to their Commands; and that, with the Honour and Preferment, they are liable to a greater Burthen and Account, than all who are subject to them; that they have an Obligation upon them to be wiser, juster, more devout and religious than all other Men; that their Precepts and their Examples must instruct, and regulate, and reform the Manners of their Subjects, whose Vices and Enormities shall be penal to them, though not to the Ease or lessening the Punishment of those who are immediately guilty of them. *Hear, O ye Kings! give Ear, O ye Princes!* He expects another kind of Attention from

from them who are so near his Person; as their Power and Authority, so their Faults are more conspicuous than other Mens. *As the Thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the House of Israel ashamed; they, their Kings, their Princes, and their Priests, and their Prophets,* says the Prophet *Jeremiah*. * God's Judgments were never notorious upon the People, till the Kings, and Princes, and Priests and Prophets swerved from their Duty. Indeed the People rarely forget their Duty, whilst the Prince performs his; when he lives towards God as he ought to do, he doth not only shew the Way to his People, but restrains them from going out of it. God hath given Kings and Princes usually Prerogatives in Nature, as well as in Authority; gives them Wisdom and Understanding above other Men; communicates his Pleasure to them what they should do, and his Instruction how they shall do it, above other Men. Common People have rarely a Capacity to understand what is their Duty; and cannot be better instructed towards the Performance of it, than to follow the Example of those who are to lead them. The Examples of Kings and Princes more advance the Service of God, than all their Laws and Precepts; and God expects it from them, as he doth more from those who are immediately under them, from great Men and Magistrates, according to their several Qualifications and Preferences before others, than he doth from those who are the Inferior, and whose Talents can extend little farther than an entire Obedience to the Dictates and Example of their Superiors.

Next to the Lustre and Eminence of Kings and Princes in Virtue, Piety and Religion, God expects to be most magnified, and to have his Service most advanced, by Bishops, and the inferior Clergy, who are not only admitted into the Courts of his House, but preferred to do all the sacred Offices in the House, in the Church of God; he expects that these Men, who are particularly chosen for and dedicated to his Service, and to a peculiar Attendance upon it, who receive Benefit and Emoluments as spiritual Persons, shall not be carnal in those Affections which prevail over the vulgar People. They who praise God, and pray unto Him on the behalf of the People, had need be more innocent than the People for whom they pray, that their Interposition and Mediation may be the more powerful and effectual. It is their Part to inform the People of the Majesty of God, and the great Blessings which he hath conferred upon them; of the Deliverances he hath wrought for them, and what Return he expects from them, and how they shall make that Return that will be acceptable to Him. They can put Kings themselves in mind that God hath smote great Nations, and slew mighty Kings for neglecting their Duty towards Him, and hath given their Dominions for an Inheritance to those who have served Him better; they can tell them that He will withdraw the Affections and Obedience of their Subjects from them, if they continue in their Rebellion against Him, to whom they owe more Allegiance than is due from those Subjects to their Greatness. They are the Men, who must inform the People, that the obeying their own Lusts, the sacrificing their Time and Labour and Endeavours to their Pride, their Luxury, their Ambition, is a worse and more odious Idolatry than the Pagans were guilty of, or that for which his own chosen People were cast off, and for ever rejected; and by this Means all the People shall both know to praise and magnify God, and take Delight in so doing. Whilst the Prince or the Clergy retain a due Reverence for God Almighty, and perform their Duties with Courage and Constancy, it is not possible for the People to be so depraved, as to provoke God's Vengeance upon their Country, what Judgments soever they may bring down upon their own Heads.

* Jer. ii. 26.

O Lord God, touch the Hearts of all Christians, who have engaged themselves in thy Service, with a true Sense of what they owe unto thee by that Profession and Relation, that they may draw many to thee, and drive no Body from thee, by their Lives and Practice. Make all Christian Kings propagate thy Religion, and the Love of thee, by their Example, in true Piety and Justice; and make all the Christian Clergy the Trumpets of thy Doctrine in the Ears of all Men, and Promoters of that Doctrine, by the Sincerity of their Lives, that they may be shining Lamps in the Eyes of the People, to lead them into those Ways which will lead them to everlasting Happiness. Amen.

PSALM CXXXVI.

WE cannot use a better Method to stir up our Devotions, than the Memory and frequent Enumeration of those particular Mercies and Miracles which God wrought of old for his People, and whereof he hath taken Care to preserve so exact a Catalogue, by so unquestionable a Record; and that Devotion will be the warmer, if, by revolving what was done of old, we find the same Mercies and Miracles continued and renewed to the Times in which we live, and the same Blessings conferred upon ourselves, which they received; as if the Record of them had been kept to put him in mind to exercise the same fatherly Kindness towards us, which he did then towards them. And if every Man, by a pious Reflection upon those general and common Benefits, can find very many of those Blessings repeated in his own Particular, and that he can very literally apply what was then and now a National Benefit, as an immediate Blessing upon his own individual Person, his Devotion is carried up to such a Height, as cannot but terminate in the giving the most profound Thanks to God, and making the most sincere Acknowledgment of God's Mercies, as can flow from the Heart of a Man. We have as much reason to magnify the Continuance of his Mercies, by the Wonders he hath wrought for us, as ever they had; nor was the leading and carrying them out of *Egypt* more miraculous, than his leading and carrying us back into our Country, when we were driven thence; since neither of them could have been performed, but by his Almighty Arm. If he renewed his Act of Creation, by raising the Earth above the Waters for them to pass through, he did little less for us, when he reduced the Waters which had overflowed the Kingdom and the Banks thereof, within their Bounds; the People, who like unruly Waters had broke in and overthrown all Government, into their old Bounds, and made them obedient again to Laws and Magistrates. He led them through the Wilderness, where there were no other People, and found Food for them, that they did not perish; and he led us through strange Countries, which did not love us, and gave us Bread to sustain us, till he delivered us; and if he slew Kings for their Sakes, that they might inherit the Land, he destroyed Tyrants and Usurpers, whom Kings would have supported, for ours, that we might possess our own, that they had deprived and robbed us of. He remembered them in their low Estate, and redeemed them from their Enemies; and his Mercy towards us, and his Redemption of us, is not less notorious, when we were in as low an Estate, and our Hopes as desperate. And being thus parallel in his Mercies and Deliverance, we must take heed that we be not parallel too in Rebellion and Ingratitude; and that there be not such a Record kept of it, and of our final Destruction, as there is of theirs.

How

How many particular Persons are there who can call to mind when they were miraculously supplied, when they were in danger of being starved, and when they were snatched out of the Enemies Hand, when they were ready to be devoured : and if this do not make them praise and magnify God for all that he hath done, and make them call upon others to do the same, they have no other Hope of Salvation, than by being again involved in the same Distresses and Perplexities, and thereby becoming more worthy of a Deliverance. God may seem to have lost, and thrown away his Blessings, by having conferred them upon unworthy and ungrateful Persons, who never remember or acknowledge them ; but He makes himself amends by throwing away those Persons too out of his Memory and Protection, and making them Monuments of his Wrath and Indignation, who would not dispose themselves to be Monuments of his Mercy and fatherly Affection.

O Lord, who hast poured down thy Blessings upon us, in a Degree equal, if not superior to what thou hast done for any other Nation ; infuse into our Hearts Grace to acknowledge that thy Goodness, and to magnify thy Holy Name, with that Duty and Gratitude, as may still incline thee to continue that thy Favour and Protection towards us. Let us never forget thy publick Deliverance, and how thou hast repaired the Breaches which were made in the Church and State ; and let those never forget it, who enjoy the most signal Deliverance. Make every particular Man revolve the Part that he hath received in that thy Providence, that he may proportionably discharge his own Duty, and stir up other Men to praise and magnify thy Name to all the World. Amen.

PSALM CXXXVII.

THEY who have not a very strong Affection of Heart for their Country, cannot love any other Thing, hardly God himself ; and if the Law of Nature obliges a Man to love and reverence his Parents who beget him, it much more binds him to a vehement Affection and Concernment for his Country, the Place of his Birth, and the Air that nourished him. The happy State and Condition of his Country is a greater Joy and Comfort to an honest Man, than his own particular State of Wealth and Prosperity can be ; and he is more afflicted and cast down for any publick Misery that befalls it, than for any Circumstance of it that brings Calamity to himself ; he feels not his own particular Sufferings, when he sees his Country covered with Tyranny and Oppression, all its Laws violated, and its Religion contemned and profaned. Joy and Mirth are very acceptable to God Almighty, being the chearful Breathings of the Soul, in Acknowledgment of the Bounty and Blessing which God bestows upon his People : but for a Man to be merry and laugh at the Funeral of his Father, is odious Impiety ; much more to be merry in the Ruins of a Man's Country, and to warm his Hands at the Fire that consumes it, is an Inhumanity inconsistent with any Pretence to Virtue and Generosity of Spirit ; it is a despising and Contempt of the loudest Vengeance that God can denounce and pour down upon a Nation : *Your Country is desolate, your Cities are burnt with Fire, and it is desolated as overthrown by Strangers,* * was the Alarm that the Prophet

* Isaiah i. 7.

phet *Isaiah* believed would have awakened *Israel* to a general Repentance. After a consuming Judgment by the Plague and Sickneſs, after a devouring Judgment by War, and Loſs of Battles, there remained ſtill ſomewhat to hope from, ſomewhat to be merry with; but when the Land was deſolated, the Cities burned, and all that was left poſſeſſed by Strangers, it was high Time for the higheſt Lamentation, and any kind of Mirth would be as impious as Idolatry. It was a terrible Repreheſion and Commination which the Prophet *Jeremiah* uſed; *Weep ye not for the Dead, neither bemoan them; but weep ſore for him that goeth away, for he ſhall return no more, nor ſee his native Country.* * To have eſcaped the preſent Slaughter, and fled from the Calamity, might have been looked upon as Safety, at leaſt as a Reprieve, which always adminiſters ſome Hope; but when there was to be no more returning, and that they who got away were never more to ſee their Native Country, they were looked upon in a better Condition, who loſt their Lives at home, and it was thought a Preferment to be buried in their own Country. To aſk of thoſe who are carried captive out of it, to be merry, is the Inſolence of a proud Conqueror; and he who can comply with it, are worthy to be Slaves, having a Mind prepared for it, by the Expiration of all his Affections for his Country, which ought to be dearer to him than his Life, or any thing his Life can be ſupplied with. There is Happineſs and Pleaſure enough to be enjoyed out of a Man's own Country, and it is an Argument of great Puſillanimity, not to be able to live and be merry out of his own Country; nor is a Man bound to believe that his own Country is the beſt Climate in the World, when it is evident that others are more healthy, as well as more fruitful than his; but there is a Piety due to his own, that cannot be extinguished by the Pleaſure or Plenty of any other. It is a Weakneſs not to be able to live out of the Company of our neareſt Friends and Relations; but it is no Weakneſs to be deeply affected with their Miſfortunes, or for their Death, at what Diſtance ſoever we are from them: nor can any Proſperity in another Country, hinder or excuſe a Man for not being ſo much afflicted for any Calamity that befalls his own, as never to entertain Mirth and Jollity in his Heart, *Nehemiah* was in no mean Station, when he was Cup-bearer to *Artaxerxes*; and we may very reaſonably believe, by the Grace and Bounty that he ſhewed towards him, that he might have had any Honour or Preferment that he would have demanded in that great and flouriſhing Empire; yet when that great King diſcerned that there was Sorrow of Heart in his Countenance, which had ſomewhat of Crime in it in that Preſence, and demanded the Reaſon of it, he made no other Excuse, but *the Place of my Father's Sepulchres lie waſte*: And when the King ſo graciously invited him to aſk ſome Favour worthy of his Royal Bounty, he would require nothing elſe, but *ſend me unto Judah, unto the City of my Father's Sepulchres, that I may build it*. A generous Spirit can think of nothing but relieving his Country, whiſt it is under a general Miſery and Calamity.

O Lord, ſince the Good and Welfare of our Country ought to be ſo dear and precious to us, that we ſhould not be capable of any Mirth and Delight, when that is covered by any of thy Judgments; and ſince for the Iniquity of the Inhabitants thereof, any Nation or Kingdom may mourn, and undergo thy moſt heavy Diſpleaſure; make that Love and Duty we owe unto our Country, one powerful Motive to us to live with that Uprightneſs towards thee,

* Jer. xxii. 10.

thee, and that true brotherly Charity towards one another, that no Vice or Transgression of ours may contribute to the bringing down thy Judgments upon the Kingdom, but that it may flourish under thy special Protection, in Peace and Plenty. Amen.

PSALM CXXXVIII.

PIETY and Devotion is so great an Ornament, that it raises the poorest Man above the Level of his own Condition, and makes him equal to his Superiors; but it becomes no Men so well, hath not that Lustre, as when it shines in Kings and Princes; when Princes are Religious, whole Nations betake themselves to the Service of God, they publish and illustrate God's Blessings, and inform the People of the Truth of all he promises by their own Experience, and are themselves the Evidence of his Loving-kindness; they acknowledge and declare that all the Good that is in themselves, all the Justice they do to their People, and all the Affection and Obedience they receive from their People, is from the pure Mercy of God towards them; they perform all their Devotions with that Reverence that becomes those who stand in the Presence of the Almighty, and are looked upon by Angels; and the very Consideration of that Presence and Observation cannot but raise the Mind to an awful Consideration of the Work it is upon. The Knowledge and Consideration of the Glory of God, and that he is much higher, and more superior to them, than they are above the meanest and the poorest of their Subjects, and yet that he looks down upon them with that Benignity, works in them a Detestation of Pride, and setting any other Value upon themselves, than as they may be instrumental by the Precepts and by their Practice, by their own Examples, and their Chastisements, to reduce all the People committed to their Charge to the true Knowledge of God, and a sincere Resignation of all their Faculties to his Service and Obedience. They look upon themselves as the Shepherds of their several Flocks; and that if they do not turn Wolves themselves, they are sure that they have Power enough to chase all other from them, and to preserve them from the Rapine of each other, and that they deliver them upon Account, without Blemish or Diminution. They have an Engagement from God himself, never to forsake them, till they forsake him; and when they are afraid of their Enemies, they know that they have not been so much afraid of him, as they ought to have been, because his right Hand had been stretched out to defend and save them, till they forced him to draw it in again by some signal Transgression; and then they renew their Courage and Confidence again by new Vows and Supplications, well knowing that God will make them perfect according to his own Acceptation, and never forsake them. This is the Benefit that attends and waits upon the Uprightness and religious Exercise of Princes, it leaves no Corner of their Dominions unblest'd, or unfruitful, when they are as humble towards God, as their Subjects are towards them; and they hate and detest Pride, as much as their Subjects abhor Oppression. There is no Sacrifice that God is so pleased and delighted with, as the Prayers and the Praises of such a Prince and People; whilst he pours out all Acknowledgment for the Blessings God hath conferred upon him, in giving him such Subjects; and they again praying for nothing but the Health and Prosperity of their King, as an abundant Supply to them of whatsoever they can stand in need of: and God recompences this mutual Gratitude, in

con-

continuing them a mutual Comfort, and Security to one another, and makes all their Neighbour Nations look upon them, as fenced in by his peculiar Protection from any Violence that would invade them, and their Land refreshed with the Dew of Heaven, and made fruitful by frequent Showers and a warm Sun, that will suffer no Barrenness to remain within, till a lawful Envy and Emulation of this transcendent Prosperity hath such a powerful Influence upon all the rest, that by transcribing their Copies, and following their Steps, they arrive at the same Tranquility that can only be increased by, and which we may be unwilling to resign but for, the Possession of the Joys under that Government, and with that Unity and Obedience which is practised in Heaven.

O Lord God, let all the World be reduced to a true and faithful Obedience to their lawful Kings and Princes, by the dutiful Obedience and Submission of those Kings and Princes to thy good Pleasure and Commandments; and make all Subjects dutiful to them, because thou hast expressly required it from them: Let the one exercise their high Authority in so just and loving a manner, that their Subjects may take Delight in their Commands; and make the People perform their Duty and their Services with that Affection and Alacrity, as Princes may take more Pleasure in their good Will, than in all the Aids and Subsidies they receive from them; and may be thus confirmed in their Confidence in each other, and be the better induced to have a right Confidence in thee, and of Blessing from thee. Amen.

PSALM CXXXIX.

IT is so very hard to be an Atheist, that many good Men believe there are none such, and that it is only a wicked Affectation in those, who discourse and live as if they did think there is no God; whereas in their Retreats, and when they are alone, they fear and tremble at what they pretend not to believe. It may be so; but I fear we may as reasonably doubt that too many speak, and seem to believe that there is that Divine Original, who in truth do not believe it; or by a perpetual Incogitancy and Industry put Him out of their Minds, so that they cannot be said to believe it. Whosoever thinks that there is a God, cannot but believe that he is always so present about us, that he sees all we do, hears all we say, and discerns all we think or imagine, or purpose to do; and there needs nothing to make us wise Men, and excellent Christians, than to believe that, and always to think upon it; and how much soever the Negligence concerns us, it seems hard to believe it, and not always to think upon it. It looks like somewhat impossible that a Man should think that God knows his down-sitting and up-rising, and understands his Thoughts at any Distance, and should yet steal to an adulterous Bed, or rise in the Morning with Purposes of Rebellion, or committing those Sins which He hath most forbidden and abhors; how could he do any one of these, if he did not think it were as easy to conceal it from Him, as from the Magistrate; for he would abstain from it, if he did believe it could be discovered to or by the Magistrate? How would Men watch every Word that falls from their Tongue, if they thought God heard that unclean and that profane Word which they would not utter before a Friend for whom they pretended the least Respect? A Man would struggle very notably with those un-
chaste,

chaste, proud, revengeful Thoughts, which insinuate themselves into him, if he thought and considered that God is a Spectator of the Conflict, and will be so well pleased with the Victory, that he would absolve him from any Guilt of those Thoughts, which he so bravely mastered and extinguished. What shall we say to this fatal Incogitancy, this wretched Stupidity, which, in spite of all these Recollections and Reflections, makes us live as if nothing that we think, or say, or do, were looked upon, or considered in Heaven; as if our Ambition could mount us so high, as would tire the Eyes of Providence to look after us; or as if we could by our Craft and Dissimulation create such a Darkness about us, that He that is Light itself cannot discern what we are doing, and the true Motives of all our Actions. He who hath exactly seen and surveyed all those Parts which our own Eyes cannot serve us to discover, cannot be deceived with any of our Pretensions, or believe that our Thoughts and Purposes are good, when our Actions are corrupt and unlawful. He sees how we pervert all the sincere Thoughts and Inclinations of our Hearts, and resist and baffle those Checks and Restraints which our own Conscience suggests to us, when we first entertain a Temptation to Ill, and the Pains we take that it may get the Dominion over us. Let us therefore no longer delude ourselves with an Imagination that we can delude the all-seeing Eye of Heaven: and since God will always look upon us, and see what we do in all Places, let us, by having Him as much in our Eyes as he hath us, watch our Thoughts so narrowly, that when they are not good He may controul them, and reducing them to Reason, so order our Words, and govern all our Actions, that He may discern that our Eyes are fixed upon Him, that we may not be afraid of, but comforted with his continual Presence; that when we endeavour to ascend up into Heaven, by admiring his Majesty, he may carry our Devotions thither, and make them acceptable and powerful there; and when we are involved in, and covered by the Darkness of any Affliction or powerful Oppression, that we cannot see any Way out of it, his Light will shine to dispel that Darkness, and lead us into Security; He will drive away our Enemies from us, and guard us from all their Malice; and our greatest Content and Comfort shall be, that he sees all our Thoughts, and is near enough to discern all our Actions, and the Thoughts and Actions of those who hate and would destroy us.

O Lord, what shall we render unto thee for all thy Benefits, that thou dost neglect all the other Works of thy Creation, infinitely more valuable than we are, otherwise than as we are dignified by thy gracious Acceptation, and vouchsafest thy Presence to and dost fix thy Eyes only upon us, who have the Wickedness to wish that thou wouldst stand farther off, and not so narrowly watch our Thoughts, our Words and Actions; let that continual Presence of thine, we beseech thee, have that immediate Influence upon our Hearts, that our Thoughts may be so pure, our Words so well weighed, and all our Actions so innocent, that they may be fit and worthy to appear and stand in thy Presence. Amen.

PSALM CXL.

IT may be a Doubt not very easy to be decided, whether the Deliverance be greater from ill and wicked Men who persecute us, or from wicked Men who love and favour us; that is, whether we are more in Danger of those who are our

open and declared Enemies, or of those who keep us Company, and profess great Kindness to us; whether we are not in truth more like to be hurt by the Good-will and Conversation of vicious and corrupt Men, than by their declared Malice and Persecution. There is Mischief enough in both their Hearts, and Poison enough in both their Tongues; from the one we may undergo Mischief, by the other we may be taught and inclined to do Mischief to other Men; one of them may traduce and rail at us, the other will flatter and commend us: and truly it is much better for us to be oppress'd our selves, than to grieve and oppress other Men; and to be reproached and calumniated, than to be unjustly commended and flattered. We may gain and be the better for the Injuries we receive, and the Oppressions we undergo by our Enemies, and those who hate us; we may learn Patience, and be disposed to look up to Heaven, and seek Relief from thence: but in evil Company, from wicked Conversation, we seek nothing but Poison, and either believe that there is no God, or wish that there was none. So that we have indeed as much Reason to make our continual Prayers to Almighty God, that he will deliver and keep us from the Company, as from the Hands of wicked Men, and from being perverted, as much as from being overthrown, in our Ways. The Snares, and Cords, and Ginns, in and by which we are most in Danger to be taken and surpris'd, are hid and spread and set by our Companions and Friends, more and oftner than by our violent Enemies, who persecute to destroy us. No proud Adversary, who labours all the Ways he can to work our Destruction, would deprive us of our Fortune, and it may be lies in wait to take our Lives from us, did ever yet contrive to lead us into Adultery, though he would be glad we should be deprehended in it; he may be angry with our Ambition, but never desired that it should be satisfied; never was at the Charge to sacrifice to our Covetousness, that it may torment, and more importune us; those fatal Cords and Nets are spread to catch and cover us, by those who walk in the same Ways with us, and are so kind as to be sometimes caught too for Company. What Mischief can the Malice of our most inveterate Enemies do to us, that is equal to this which our ordinary Friends lead us into? They can only make our Condition in this World uneasy and grievous to us; in which, if we behave ourselves well, they improve and advance our Title to the next, and it may be hasten our Possession of it; whereas the other frequently renders our Life here as unpleasant, and destroys all our Hopes of the future; they both hurt the Body alike, if they prevail, but the one destroys the Soul, which the other doth no harm to: and we may reasonably believe that the Deliverance from one of these Evils is more easy to God himself; that is, that he is more inclined to one, than to the other; since we see very frequent Manifestation of his Mercy, in supporting afflicted and oppressed Men, in very heavy and notorious Persecutions, and, in the End, delivering them from the Pride and Malice, and making them superior to their insolent and triumphing Enemies, who in their Sight are cast into the Pits they had digged for others. Many Monuments of this Deliverance are daily raised and erected in the World: But we have very rarely seen God put himself to the Trouble of drawing a Man out of the Hands of those Enemies which he hath chosen for himself, out of the Company of vicious and wicked Men, in which he is delighted, and helps to hide those Cords and spread those Nets in which himself is caught and intangled. Such Men rarely call to God for Deliverance; and He is content to suffer them to enjoy the painful Pleasure which they have chosen, and take Delight in, till the Time of Deliverance is past.

O Lord,

O Lord, deliver us from those proud Enemies who oppress us, and who, to make their Oppression seem just, load us with Reproach and Obloquies, that we may be thought to deserve more than they lay upon us; preserve us, we beseech thee, both from their Hands and their Tongues, that they may neither be able longer to do us harm, nor to perswade others that they do justly towards us; hear the Voice of our Supplications, and extend thy Salvation towards us, and till thou thinkest fit to relieve us, suffer no Temptation to prevail with us, to endeavour our own Relief by any Means not prescribed or approved by thee. Amen.

PSALM CXLI.

THERE is no one Thing which we ought more to pray to God for, than that our Prayers may not be an Offence to Him; that we may think of Him, when we think we pray to Him; that the Manner of our Devotion may be such, as may be no Dishonour to Him, as Absence of Mind and Incogitance cannot but be; and that the Petitions we address to Him, may not, for want of Deliberation, and for the Folly of them, be rejected; that our Prayers may ascend as Incense, which always goes upwards; and that we may not, out of an hypocritical Custom, lift up our Hands to Him, when our Hearts are contriving some Wickedness to affront Him. We have never more need of a Guard upon our Tongue, that it may not offend, nor of a Door before our Lips, that no idle or evil Word may go out from thence, than when we are at our Prayers; because we desire God to hearken, and to consider what we say then to Him. We are so much in love with ourselves, and so little with other Men, that the Subject of our Prayers being commonly concerning ourselves and concerning others, there is very great Danger that we ask too much for ourselves, and too little for others; that we pray only for ourselves, and against other Men; we would have more than we have, and we as much desire that they should have less; indeed that they should have nothing which we would have. If we could so regulate our Devotions, as to ask nothing for ourselves, but what would do us good, and nothing for or against other Men, (for we may pray against several Ranks and Degrees of Men) but as it may do them good, we might reasonably hope and believe that God would not only presently hear our Prayers, but make haste to help us. There be very few Things we ought more to pray to be delivered from, than from the Conversation and Company of wicked Men, who are more noisome than any Disease, and more infectious than the most pestilent Sickness; that we may not grow in love with their Wit, how pleasant soever, nor be delighted with their Luxury; and above all, that we may not be trusted with their Secrets: And there are very few Things we ought more earnestly to beseech God to bestow upon us, or be more solicitous to obtain, than that He will give us such true Friends as may inform our weak Understanding, and reform our perverse and froward Wills by their Wisdom and Authority; Friends, who will not flatter us, and comply with our Infirmities and Follies, but search out and discover our Faults we would conceal, and gently preserve us from censuring ourselves. Such Friends are the immediate Messengers of God, as good Angels, to lead us through the World. Whilst we
restrain

restrain our Prayers within these Limits, God inclines his Ear towards us, and looks upon us as a People willing and desirous to please Him; and after granting this, he will deny us nothing.

It is much harder how to behave ourselves in our Prayers, when we exceed what relates to ourselves, and what concerns others more than ourselves, and yet we are bound to pray for others as much as ourselves; our Prince, our Country, our Parents and Benefactors, are all so much our own Concernment, that when we pray for those, we pray for ourselves; and with reference to others, the generality of Mankind, or particular Men who labour under Sickness, Adversity, or any other Mortification, the Measure that is best for us to observe, is, that we ask that for them, which we would be glad that they or others should ask for us, if we were in their Condition, and under the same Mortification. Nothing is more to be avoided in our Prayers, than an Affectation of Words, and indulging too much to our own Fancy, either in a luxurious Description of God's own Attributes, and mentioning our own Weakness, Sins, and Infirmities, and many Expressions of that Kind, which are not only lawful, but useful and commendable in other Devotions and pious Discourses, are not fit and proper for our Prayers; but in the very Pronunciation of the Words, may provoke or stir the Fancy and Imagination so to exercise itself, that the Mind is less intent upon the Sacrifice it is then offering, and upon which it ought to be entirely fixed, without the least wandering or going astray; whereas upon the other Occasions, the more large and extensive every Word and Expression is, it will have the greater Operation, and raise more Reflections and useful Contemplation in the Minds of them that read, or them that hear: but in Prayer the Mind should be as much divested as is possible of all Fancy and Imagination. Above all, Humility is the principal Ingredient into true and pious Prayer; and therefore the least Expression that may in any degree contribute to the exalting ourselves, or preferring ourselves before other Men, or undervaluing, reproaching or condemning other Men, is so much against the Nature of Prayer, that the best we can hope for of such Prayers, is, that God will not hear them. It may be there cannot be a better Way found out to remove and cure the Defects and Excesses and other Imperfections in our Prayers, and those Wanderings and Incogitances which we are guilty of in our Prayers, than that they be made much shorter, and be oftner repeated; and there is one Presumption that is very wonderful, and as it makes our Prayers the more irregular and extravagant, so it is not to be doubted, that they are likewise the more unsuccessful; which is, that whereas all Men are glad to be taught and assisted in what they go about; if we are to speak with the King, we are not only willing to be instructed in what Manner we are to speak with him, but the very Words we are to use; there are few Things we are to do, that we are not willing to receive Advice in; only in Praying every Man is so expert, that he will not be taught, follow no Man's Advice or Example; and he that can make nothing else for himself, will take upon him to make his own Prayers; whereas there are few Men have more need to have any thing else made for them, than their Prayers: from whence it comes to pass that there is so much Discord in the Minds of Men, and that those Contentions which are used to be managed and determined in Schools, are now ventilated in Mens Prayers, and God called upon and challenged to determine the Matter in doubt on his Side that prays, by pouring down his Vengeance upon the Heads of the Gainfayers. These Men never desire a Watch to be set before their Mouth, and have too good an Opinion of all that issues out from thence, to wish that there were a Door to their Lips.

There

There is yet one Difficulty more, greater than the rest, how we are to behave ourselves in our Prayers, towards our Enemies, towards those who undoubtedly do us wrong, and persecute us without a Cause; for there is great Difference between what we ought to do towards those who are justly angry with us, or with whom we are unjustly angry, and what we may do to those who are our declared Enemies, without any Offence given by us, and desire our Destruction. If we follow the Example of *David*, and many other holy Men, we may ask very severe Judgments against them in our Prayers, and such as may not be terminated in this Life; *Let the Mischief of their own Lips cover them; let burning Coals fall upon them; let them be cast into the Fire, into deep Pits, that they rise not up again*, as in the *Psalms* precedent, and somewhat like this in every *Psalms*, where he speaks of his own, or of God's Enemies, notoriously wicked Persons. And they who think this such an Excess as is not consistent with Christian Charity, find an ill Excuse for so frequent a Dialect, when they will have that to be thought, and meant to be spoken in the future Tense, as a Prophecy which was spoken in the imperative and optative Mood; and Men shall do well whilst they are prescribing to themselves and others the Practice of necessary Charity, to take heed that they do not enjoin Men to pretend to do that which they are not able to do, and which Charity doth not oblige to do, or restrain them from doing; that is, to put no Difference between those whom they are required to love, that is, all good Men, and those whom they are required, to hate, all wicked Persons, in their Prayers; but to pray with equal Affection for them both: which no Man can, or for ought I know, ought to do. *David* did directly pray against his Enemies, and it is not evident that we may not do so too, if it be as evident that they are God's Enemies, as that his were; and because they are his Enemies, more than because they are ours. We may pray that they may not have Power, when they have Malice, to hurt us; and that they may be rather cut off by the Hand of Providence, than to be able to cut us off by what Hand soever: Nor doth our Saviour's Injunction to *pray for our Enemies*, any more restrain us from praying against them, that he will not suffer them longer to dishonour Him, or injure us; than his other Command, that we *forgive our Enemies*, doth forbid us to repair to the publick Justice for Satisfaction, for the Injuries and Damage we sustain by their Oppression. We must heartily pray that they may be saved at the last Day, and that no Injuries they have done us, which in that Sense we forgive and release, may then condemn them, because that Punishment infinitely exceeds any Crime they can have committed against us; nor can we find any Imprecation in Scripture that directly extends so far. We must be sure that what we ask against them in our Prayers, may have no Ingredient of Revenge; but that our principal Desire is, that God may not be dishonoured, that we ourselves may be defended and protected, and that they who delight in Mischief, may not heap more Coals of Fire upon their own Heads. We cannot love our Enemies too well, nor pray for them too much, if we do both without Hypocrisy, and pretend to do no more than we do heartily and really perform.

O Lord, give us Grace to pray unto thee with that Humility and Devotion that becomes poor Supplicants, who have no other Hope or Dependance, but upon thee. Let us never pretend to pray to thee, but when our Heart is fixed, and all our Thoughts upon thy Divine Assistance; and give always such Friends, as may put us in mind

of what we owe, and are to pay unto thee. Convert our Enemies from their malicious Conspiracies and unjust Prosecutions against us, that they may not farther incur thy Displeasure, or bring farther Damage upon us. Protect us from their Rage, and if they resist thy gracious Infusions, discover the wicked Thoughts of their Hearts to all the World, that they may be ashamed of all their Inventions; and all others may be ashamed of having been misled by them, and think it but Justice to make them Examples of the publick Justice and Severity. Amen.

PSALM CXLII.

THough we ought at all Times to think of God Almighty; so think of Him, as to admit no Thought into our Hearts that may displease and offend Him; and we can never be without Occasion to pray to Him; yet the best and most pious Christian is not at all Times equally disposed to think of Him, nor doth he pour out his Devotions with the same Fervor in all Seasons. There would be no Time for Mirth, if every Moment of our Lives were to be spent in Prayer; and yet Mirth is prescribed to us, not as Physick, but as good and wholesome Diet. God doth not require that we should macerate Nature, and knows well how much Health and Chearfulness contribute to all the Offices of Piety itself. He was a bountiful Dispenser of our Time, when He assigned six Parts of it to ourselves, to our own Use, to spend in that Labour and Exercise as might be for our own Profit, Benefit, and Convenience; and reserved only a Seventh to be spent in a devout Contemplation of his Bounty and Goodness to us, in a Reflection upon what we have done amiss in that Time which He gave us to ourselves, and in prescribing strict Rules to ourselves, so to walk and behave ourselves in the succeeding Portion of our Time, that He may see that He is not out of our Thoughts then; (all which Recollection and Resolution is an excellent Sabbath-days Exercise.) And if we shall give Him, in order to make our Sabbath-day's Work the easier, another Seventh of our Time, so much of every Day, in which not only vain and idle, but all honest worldly Thoughts are shut out, and only such Thoughts and Considerations admitted, as may dispose and prepare us for Eternity, we may with the more Liberty and Alacrity unbend our Thoughts, and spend our other Time in innocent Mirth, lawful Recreations, and other Actions relating to the good Husbandry of the World. To shut out God from our Thoughts, seldom or never to think of Him; and to pretend so to retain Him, as never to think of any Thing else; are two Extremes: the one below and unworthy Human Nature itself, and so to be abhorred and reformed; the other so much above it, that we may justly fear we do but pretend to it, and delude ourselves in an Affectation that should be corrected. But besides this Inequality of Temper to constrain ourselves to the same Thoughts at all Times, we may reasonably and piously believe that it is very hard, even in those select Times which are dedicated to Devotions, which we ourselves set apart for Devotion, to be equally intent, equally warm and fervent in our Prayers; there is somewhat in our Bodies, and somewhat in our Minds, somewhat in the Exigence of our Spirits, and somewhat in the Exigence of our Fortunes and present Condition, that composes or disturbs, that relaxes or extends our Devotions, even in those chosen Seasons of Devotion. If this *Psalm*

was

was composed by *David* in memory of the Straits he was in, in the Cave at *Adullam*, as most learned Men conceive it was, we may very well believe that he had greater Agitations of Soul, another kind of bequeathing himself, and resigning up all his Thoughts to God Almighty, than in any other Part of his Life, by how much his Fortune seemed then more desperate, than at any other Time: His Flight from *Saul*, and Departure from the Court, was very abrupt and sudden; that the General of an Army, grown terrible by so many signal Victories, and gaining so many Battles; that the Son-in-Law to the King should be forced to fly from the Court and the Kingdom in so great Haste; that he should be able to take no Servant to attend him, and be reduced to so great Straits, that a few Loaves of Bread came very seasonably to sustain him, was such a Mortification, as could not but oblige him to muster up all his Spirits, and and call all the Faculties of his Understanding to his Assistance: And all this supplied him with no other Skill towards his Escape, than to fly into the Kingdom of the Enemy, an Enemy he had sometimes subdued in Battle; and he quickly found himself so much deceived in this Project, that it was more necessary to get from thence, than it was to come thither, though not so easy; he was known and discovered, and could not avoid being brought before the King, nor had Hope to get from him, but by appearing an Object fitter for his Contempt than Fear, by counterfeiting himself mad; he was wise enough to get out of the Hands of the Enemy, which gave him very little more Security than he had before; he was alone, without Friend, without Servant, without Food to sustain Nature, or knowing how to get any. In this Distress, the Cave at *Adullam* was a very seasonable Retreat, which hid him from his Enemies, but could no otherwise preserve him from them, but by hiding him. Now he betook himself to his Prayers, and poured out his miserable Condition before Him from whom he had received so many Deliverances. It is very probable, that if he had been first in this Cave, so divested of all Inventions for his own Safety, as then to have resorted only to God for Refuge, he would never have gone to *Gath*, nor been put to practise that unkingly Vice of Dissimulation to save his Life; but whilst he had any Stratagems of his own to preserve him, the Agitation and Activity would not suffer him to enter into the Cave, where he no sooner found himself, than he found the only Way to preserve himself; his calling upon God, prevailed with God to call upon his Friends, upon those of his Father's House to go thither to him, and to rescue him from his own Melancholy, and to give him Strength to provide for his own Security, till God better provided for it; and the Repair of his Friends thither, was the Effect of his Recollection and Devotion in the Cave.

GOOD God, let us never forget, or omit to call to thee for Help, since we can never obtain that which is sufficient for us, but by thee; and if we are so weak, or so wilful, that we can be no other way reduced to a full and entire Dependance upon thee, bring us to it by a wholesome Despair of all other Means, and by a due Recollection how deceitful an Assistance all Companions and Friends are, when they are stood in need of, and how weak a Refuge the Protection of Kings and Princes is; and therefore let us repair to thee alone, as our Portion and Defence. Amen.

PSALM CXLIII.

IF when we find ourselves under any violent Oppression, under such a terrible Persecution, as contradicts and overthrows all Rules and Obligations of Justice; so that in respect of the Measure of it, we may think ourselves in a Degree worthy of the immediate Protection of God himself, and to be delivered by Him; we would, before we vex and struggle too much, recollect ourselves, and seriously consider what we have done to bring that Mortification and Calamity upon us, not how we have provoked those, who so injuriously handle us; in which it may be, upon a very short Recollection, we may pronounce ourselves very innocent, but what we have done equivalent to any body else, the Acts of Unkindness and Injustice we have practised towards others: and if we do not in this Survey find that Check that would accuse us, we would yet farther examine what enormous Offence we have committed against God himself, in the Practice of some monstrous Sin, as much beyond the Limits of all Excuse, as that Carriage and Behaviour of our malicious Enemies is towards us; we might very probably from that Animadversion, begin such a humble Acknowledgment of our own Transgressions, and such a hearty Repentance for the same, as might be the best Method to procure a short and full Redemption from the Evils we groan under, by the transcendent Iniquity of other Men. This was the Course and Method which *David* observed (at least if, according to the Opinion of many of the Fathers, this *Psalms* was composed upon that Occasion) when he was in that desperate Agony upon the Rebellion of *Absalom*. He begun not with any bitter Execrations upon the unnatural Presumption and cursed Rebellion of his own Son, which he well knew was a Crime, and a Sin odious in the Sight of Heaven, and would be exemplarily punished by Vengeance from thence: but he began with a strict Inquisition into himself; what he had done to bring that Judgment upon himself; that the kindest, bountiful, and most indulgent Father should be dethroned and deposed by the Son he loved best, and beyond this, that he should prosecute him to take his Life from him; and he quickly found that himself had been first in the Rebellion against a Father much more kind, and bountiful, and indulgent, than ever he had been to *Absalom*; that he himself had shed innocent Blood, that he might more easily cover another enormous Sin: and the Memory of this so terrified him, wrought that Consternation within him, that he had no Spirit left to call for Judgment upon another, when himself was not able to stand in Judgment. This was it that overwhelmed him with Sorrow, and made his Life grievous to him; the Conscience of these Sins of his own, divested him of all his Understanding and all his Courage, and made him fly from his strongest City, upon a childish Rebellion, which by his own Courage he might have suppressed the first Hour it broke out, until he had humbled himself for his own foul Fault, and procured Remission for himself by such a profound Repentance, as makes this *Psalms* to be chosen by the Church for one of the Seven which are called *Penitential*; he neither hoped nor asked for Deliverance from his Enemies; and he no sooner obtained Pardon for himself, and renewed his Promise of future Integrity, than his Subjects returned to their Obedience, and his Son perished in his Offence, and could not be preserved by all his Caution and Commands. It is no wonder that

Men

Men lie so long under those Afflictions which are brought upon them very unjustly, and increased by very unjust Circumstances, and from which with great Importunity, and as they believe with great Devotion, they desire God to deliver them; when they only consider what they suffer, not at all what they have done; how unreasonably and unjustly Men deal with them, never how unreasonable and unjust they have been towards other Men. Indeed, they to whom we have done no Wrong, it may be who have been obliged to us, have no Title to injure us, and can have no Excuse for so doing, though we have been without any Provocation unkind or unfaithful to other Men, who have not been unjust to us; and therefore we think it impertinent under such Mortifications to enquire farther than into the Persons themselves who do us harm, and the no Ground and Excuse they can pretend for the Wrong they do to us, and so raise our Complaints, and appeal accordingly: But God chuses that unexpected Way to reclaim us, and to bring to our Memory an Action of our Youth, it may be in another Climate, which we have forgotten, and no Body else can remember, by exposing us to that kind of Violence or Injustice which we have practised towards others, and never repented of; and if we are hereby stirred up to ask Pardon for ourselves, it will be the best Motive to procure Justice from or upon those who oppress us.

*G*Racious God, in all the Calamities and Afflictions which thou dost suffer to be brought upon us, by the Conspiracy and Combination of false and malicious Men; let us more revolve and consider what we have in the whole Passages of our Life been guilty of, in the same kind, than what we at present suffer from other Men; make us to remember all the Contrivances we have had, through our Emulation and Ambition, against the Fame and the Fortune of those who we thought were like to get any Advantage over us, and how much Mischief we would then have done to them, if it had been in our Power; and make us heartily sensible of those our Transgressions, and truly penitent for the same, and then hear our Prayer, and then deliver us from the Malice and Power of our Enemies, whether by their Conversion or Destruction, as shall tend most to thy Glory. Amen.

PSALM CXLIV.

CAMPS and Courts are the Theatres upon which God's Miracles are most shewn, where they are most apparent, and where Thousands entirely resign themselves to the Command and Conduct of One Man; which, if they do not, all is Confusion, and there is no Safety; and there cannot be a greater Instance of God's Power and Direction, than in such a Subjection, such a Resignation. God most delights in Peace, but he is most visible, and may be said to keep the Reins more in his own Hands, in War; in Peace he doth, as it were, more submit the Effects to second Causes. Wariness and common Prudence, negative Virtues, an Absence of Pride, of Anger, and the like Vices, with a very moderate degree of Activity, seldom miscarry or are disappointed of a good Share in the Benefits of Peace: But in War, all Virtues have need to be in their Perfection, Courage and Industry, Circumspection and Discipline in the utmost Extent, to prevent

those common Accidents which may probably fall out, and are most frequently fatal and destructive; and with all this, he keeps the Event so entirely in his own Hands, that all Stratagems are disappointed and deluded, and the Victory falls to that Side which had least Probability or Confidence to obtain it. Famous Generals have been defeated by Novices in War, great Armies overthrown by small Numbers, and incredible Massacres have been made with the Loss of very few Men. The greatest Victories have fallen out by such unexpected Accidents, by such gross Mistakes; by the Change of the Wind, by the sudden Brightness of the Sun, by a Shower of Rain; that no Reason could be assigned for it, but *that the Battle is the Lord's, and therefore neither the Spear nor the Sword have prevailed.** It is so much his own Appellation and Attribute, *the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in Battle*, that he will never suffer the Event of those to depend on any but himself. *They cried to God in the Battle, and he was intreated of them,* † will be Cause enough of any Victory, as it was of that over the *Hagorites*. Of all Professions of Men, the Soldier ought to be most religious. Nor is God's Omnipotence less discernible in the Courts of Princes; in the Subordination of all Degrees of Men to one single Person, and their joint voluntary Submission to his Dictates and Commands. Their Submission may be said to be voluntary, because such a Multitude could never be compelled to Obedience by one Man; nor could Laws be of Force, if they would unite their Force against them. It is therefore God's imprinting a Dignity and a Majesty in the Countenance and Presence of Kings and Princes, that gives them Confidence to command, and an Authority to exact Obedience; and it is his Influence upon the Affections and Hearts of Subjects to dispose them to pay a Duty and Submission to their Prince, because they look upon him as substituted by God to govern over them, and as his Deputy, whom they cannot resist or disobey, without being undutiful to Him whose Deputy he is. This makes them do that which they are not many times willing to do, and submit to those Commands which they often think are not reasonably given. Nor would this Authority be so lasting, and have that Dominion over the Minds of Men, if he did not sometimes, upon the Undutifulness, and Disobedience, and Rebellion of Subjects, bow down the Heavens, and come down, appear himself in the behalf of his Vicegerents, and terrify the Rebellious into their Submission; if he did not sometimes cast forth his Lightning to discover the dark Machinations and Conspiracies which are entered into against them; and if he did not sometimes send down his own Hand from above, to deliver them out of great Waters, work Miracles to preserve them from the Tumults and seditious Insurrections of the People, and make that very People Instruments to suppress and punish that Insurrection and Sedition, that neither their Vanity nor their Falshood shall prevail against their Sovereign: God doth not work so many Miracles for all the World besides, as he doth for the Persons of Kings and Princes, in raising such a Hedge and a Wall about them, that the Complaints and Murmurs of their Subjects do not break out into Rebellions, and that Rebellion itself doth not destroy them; in making the same Impressions of Majesty in their Sons and in their Daughters, that they inherit the same Obedience; that their Garners be full in a publick Dearth, and their Necessities supplied and provided for in the most general Necessity and Calamity. And therefore, if there be not an extraordinary Endeavour in Kings and Princes to magnify God's Goodness, and to advance his Honour and Glory, they will have reason to apprehend and fear that he will cease,

* 1 Sam. xvii. 47.

† 1 Chron. v. 20.

cease and discontinue to work Miracles for them, which alone would reduce them into the Rank and Condition of other Men.

O Lord God, give Peace in our Time; and if thou dost suffer us to run into a War, or suffer our Enemies to bring a War upon us, assist us in that War, and do thou fight our Battles for us. Unite us all in a firm and fast Obedience and Duty to the King, and chearful Submission to his Government and Commands; and let no Murmurs or Repinings corrupt that Affection and Duty which we ought to have for him. And let this Union and dutiful Submission of all his Subjects to him, be looked upon by him as the Operation of thy good Spirit for the Advancement of his Honour and Glory; and make him thereupon the more solicitous and zealous to advance the Honour and Glory that is due to thee, and to thy holy Name. Amen.

PSALM CXLV.

GOD is all Good and all Excellence; his Majesty, and Power, and Glory cannot be magnified and celebrated enough by the Tongues of Men and Angels; nor were either in any Proportion to what it is, if Men or Angels could find Expressions to describe it, or make it to be comprehended: yet he is well contented that we shall magnify him most for that which we best understand of him; and that we shall admire and love him best for the good Effects we find of that Majesty and Power, which we cannot comprehend in the Extent of it. With what Comfort could we look upon the glorious Honour of his Majesty, and upon the Power of his Justice, that makes the World to tremble, if he were not gracious and full of Compassion, slow to Anger, and of great Mercy? Let others lose themselves in the Contemplation of his eternal Being, of his omnipotent Power and Wisdom in creating the World, making or finding first a Chaos, and then reducing and forming that Chaos into Order and Beauty: His making the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars to amaze the World; and yet, lest they should be too much exalted with their own Light and Lustre, his shutting them up in Darknes by the Night, and for some time, as it were, extinguishing them: His creating the Angels to give their continual Attendance about his Person, and to be sent on his Errands, and yet his magnifying himself more, and being more delighted in his Creation of Man than of the Angels, and all the World beside; his infinite Love and Care and Kindness for that his darling Creature, in making him Monarch under himself of his whole Creation, reserving only Heaven his own Habitation to himself, and even in that preparing a glorious Quarter for his beloved Man: Let others in their divine Raptures take a View of these sublime Actions and Manifestations of his Almightyness; whilst we rejoice in his tender Mercy; and that how obstinate soever we are in offending him, he is slow to punish and revenge it. We have reason to be glad that his Power is so great, and that his Dominion shall endure for ever; because he favours not Oppression, but upholds those who fall under the Tyranny of their proud Adversaries, and lifts them up who are bowed down, and kept down by prevalent Injustice and Cruelty. It is well for us, that in the midst of all the Uncharitableness and Rapine of the World, where the strong and mighty rob and impoverish the weak, and the rich and covetous feed upon the poor and wretched People; that he reserves enough in his own Hand,
that

that when he doth open it, gives them not only Meat to sustain them, but all things else to please and satisfy them. Whilst he is just, the Injuries of others ought not to grieve us much, because they cannot hurt us long; when He, whose Habitation is at so vast a Distance from us, that our Enemies hope to wreak their Malice upon us before He shall come to take Notice of it, vouchsafes yet to be within our Call, as ready to assist and relieve us, as we to beg it of him. We cannot doubt but He will put those farther off, who were too near us, and remove them to such a Distance from us, that they shall not be able to do us harm. God never uses his Power so willingly, never exercises his Strength so effectually, as to relieve those who are oppressed, and as in destroying those, who, believing themselves above the reach of common Justice, insult upon the innocent and the humble: And for all those seasonable and happy Deliverances; for surprising us with Liberty, when by the Surprise of our Enemies we are cast into Prison; for reprieving and giving us Life, in the Minute when Death hath even seized us; he requires nor expects nothing else from us, but our Thanks, and that we praise and magnify his holy Name: which, how small a Recompence and Compensation forever it is, is more than we can find in our Hearts to give him with Truth and Sincerity.

GRACIOUS Father, whose Mercies are over all thy Works, and who takest most delight in pardoning those who have offended thee most, if they do but call upon thee in Truth, when they have nothing else to call upon; if they do heartily rely upon thee, after they have been counsel'd and deceived by all upon whom they chose to rely; be so merciful unto us, that when we do, even in those Exigents, call upon thee, we may do it with that Sincerity, that our Call do not drive thee farther from us; make us weary at last of deluding thee in counselling our selves, that thy Justice may not prevail to divert thy Mercy from us, but that our Hearts, as well as our Mouths, may praise thee, and acknowledge the wonderful Things which thou hast done for us. Amen.

PSALM CXLVI.

GOD hath made this World, not only for us to live in, but to take Pleasure and Delight in; the Health he gives us here, and the Peace, and Plenty, and Prosperity, are Blessings which he sends to encrease our Joy, and to make us sensible of the Happiness of this World; nor is it any Evidence that our Hearts are set upon the Joys of Heaven, as they ought to be, when we murmur and condemn the Blessings we do or may enjoy upon the Earth. It would be no Commendation of the Beauty and Delicacy of a Palace, or of the healthy Air in which it is situated, that we found a sudden Refreshment and Delight by coming into it, out of some noisome Dungeon in which we had been very long imprisoned; a very ordinary Habitation in a very indifferent Climate, would seem a Paradise to us, upon such an Alteration and Remove. It is the Glory of Heaven, and we cannot represent a more lively Image of that Glory to our selves, than that when we quit and depart from the most beautiful and heighten'd Satisfaction in all the Pleasures this good World can yield, if we have enjoyed them with that Innocence and Integrity we ought to do, we are presently admitted to a Fruit-
much

tion of those, which, upon the Evidence of the Sense we then have, are so much more sublime and delicate, more ravishing, and more comforting, that we wonder, and are as angry with ourselves as that divine Place and Conversation will admit us to be, that we could ever find any Relish in the former. But this Reformation in our Taste and Palate, is only wrought by the Transplantation; whilst we remain here, we may lawfully take moderate Pleasure in our being here. It is an invaluable Blessing whilst we remain, in this World, to live under the Protection and Government of a good and gracious Prince, in whose Justice and Wisdom we ought to put our Trust, and depend upon that Security which he provides for us: and God is so far from looking upon our want of Reverence towards, and want of Confidence in our just and lawful Prince, as an Evidence of our Confidence in and Dependence upon himself, that he renounces our Subjection, and considers our Rebellion against him whom he hath appointed to govern over us, as a Rebellion against himself, and will not suffer us to entertain so much as a disloyal or negligent Thought towards the King, without his particular Vengeance. Thus far we are in the right: Love and esteem this present World, we may; reverence and trust the King or Prince who governs us, we ought to do; the Danger is from the Excess of both. If we are so much delighted with the Pleasures of this World, with the Honours, Dignities and Preferments of it, with the Power and Command which we exercise over other Men, and with the Submission and Reverence they pay to our Persons, or to our Places; if we set our Hearts so much upon these Inequalities, as not to be willing to part with them, for whatsoever may succeed to, or after them; if we look upon all these Conveniencies (which are in themselves great Blessings upon those who enjoy and manage them with that Moderation and Christian Prudence which they ought to do) as the utmost and best Advancement God can confer upon us; we do not herein set a great Price and Value upon this World, but undervalue and condemn the World that is to come, and prefer the Company of vain and weak and wilful Men, before that of God himself, with the Angels in Heaven. And if we are so much transported with the Courts of Princes, and the Pomp thereof; if we look upon the Bounties and Honours which they can do, or pour out upon us, as such real and solid Preferments, that we would not exchange them for Heaven itself; and if we so put our Trust in Princes, as to withdraw or lessen our Dependence upon heavenly Providence, and think ourselves so well as not to desire to be better; we do not extol Princes, but dethrone God Almighty; and by not allowing them to be God's Lords, we depose them, and level them to the lowest of the People. When we fall into these Extravagancies, we cannot compare the Pleasures of this World to so low a Subject, that is not infinitely to be preferred before them; nor the Power or Faith of Princes to any thing that is so weak, or so little to be relied upon. The Infirmities and Weakness of their Natures, their affected Vanities and Pride, their want of Piety towards God, and their want of Justice towards Men, their very Mortality and sudden expiring in the Height of all their Glory, and the as sudden Fall and Contempt that attends those who have been raised by them upon their Dissolution, will easily prevail over all Men who are in their Wits, to put their utmost Trust wholly and only in Him, before whom all Kings and Princes must appear with Fear and Reverence.

O Lord, who hast created Heaven and Earth, and hast appointed us to pass through this World, and to enjoy the Blessings thereof, before we can wait upon thee in the next World, where thou hast reserved Blessings for us of a far more excellent Quality, and as much surpassing all below as the Heaven is above the Earth; suffer us to be no otherwise affected with these below, but as they provoke and sharpen our Appetite for those above. Let not the Greatness and Power of the most mighty Kings or Princes so dazzle our Eyes, as to make us imagine that they can give us any thing, or take any thing from us that is worthy of reposing such a Trust in them, as may in any degree lessen our absolute Dependence upon thee. Amen.

PSALM CXLVII.

SINCE we can never praise God enough, nor too often take occasion to praise him; and since we can never enough comprehend his Greatness and his Power, every Branch whereof will administer new Matter to magnify his Name; we cannot do better than to make the largest Prospect to our selves of his great Works, and to extract such an Inventory of his great Actions, that from a view of those Particulars, which seem to be most removed from us and our immediate Concernments, we may come to a due and pious Consideration of his Bounty even from what seems most remote from us, to the Contemplation of those Favours, which, being nearer our Observation, are more the Objects of our Sense. We may contemplate the wonderful Power of God from the Structure of the Heavens, from his Creation of the Sun, the Moon and the Stars; and from the magnifying his Skill and Understanding in telling the Number of the Stars, and calling them all by their Names, we may reasonably conclude, that the Wit and Art of Man, how far soever, and how warrantably soever it is advanced in the Knowledge of Astronomy, is not yet, nor ever shall arrive at that Perfection, as to tell the Number of the Stars, or to call them all by their Names; but that there are very many more Stars, and of other Names than those which we have discovered; for God would not illustrate his own Knowledge and Wisdom, by his being able to tell the Number of the Stars, if the Number were not greater than we do yet conclude it to be, or if the Curiosity and Industry of Man could be able to discover the true Number thereof. It had been no notable Description that *Job* makes of the Power and Omnipotence of God, which maketh *Arcturus*, *Orion* and *Pleiades*, and the Chambers of the South, and sealeth up the Stars, if the Skill and Art of Man could pry into those Chambers, and open those Seals to know the Number of them, and their Influence. We may continue and enlarge our Contemplation upon that Covering of Heaven, the Clouds, those large and stupendous Receptacles of Rain and Water, enough to refresh the Earth after the longest and most devouring Drought, and without which Man could have nothing else to eat but that Dust of which he was created, and so must be instantly reduced into his first Principle; and it must be no small Comfort to us to consider the Care he takes to provide Food for the Beasts of the Field, and for the Fowls of the Air, and to supply their starving Im-

portunity,

portunity, since we know his Providence is extended with much more Kindness and Bounty towards the meanest of the Sons of Men. With what Amazement do we behold, and can scarce endure the sudden and intolerable Cold that proceeds from the Breath of his Nostrils; the Snow that looks so innocent, and so light, as if it could oppress Nothing, and yet kills, and covers the Earth from the Warmth and Sight of the Sun; and the Ice that turns the Rivers into dry Lands, and makes the Waters bear the Impression of the Feet of Men and Beasts, and the greatest Burthens they can bear, with less Resistance than the Earth makes; and in a Moment, by another Breath of his Nostrils, by a favourable and a blessed Wind, all those Mountains of Ice and Snow become dissolved, the Rivers again open their Mouths, and the Floods return into their usual Channels and to their natural Administrations, and what seems perished and destroyed, receives new Life and Vigour, and grows stronger, and flourishes more from that Cold which had almost killed it. The different Seasons of the Year, and the Operations thereof; the Length and Shortness of the Days and of the Nights; the animating and cherishing Heat of the Sun, and the scorching and devouring Warmth and Fire thereof; the gentle Gales and Breathings of the Winds for the Refreshment of Heaven and Earth, and for the Health of Man and Beast; and then the Storms and Tempests, by the Excess and Extent of those very Winds, which terrify the World, and seem to shake the Foundations thereof; the Voice of God in Thunder, and his breathing out Lightning to make Darkness the more full of Astonishment and Horror, are all Subjects which will raise the Mind and Spirit of Man to the most devout Estimation and Reverence of the Greatness and Power of God.

But then, how devout and useful soever those Contemplations may be, we do with much more Comfort reflect upon the Tenderness and Compassion of God towards those who are dejected in their Spirits, and who are pressed with the Weight of his Displeasure, how justly soever incurred; if we are sensible of the Wounds we have given ourselves, and do not widen them by repeating the old, or committing new Transgressions, how willing he is to bind up those Wounds, and to heal them so perfectly, that there shall remain no Scar to put him in mind of what we had done amiss, or to expose us to the Reproach of our Enemies. There is no Part or Degree of his Majesty so admirable to us, or that we can consider with that Joy of Heart, as that he delights to manifest his Power in casting down the proud and imperious Wrong-Doer, with whom innocent and upright Men cannot grapple or contend, to dissolve and demolish all his insolent Contrivances, and raises the Humble and Oppressed out of the Reach of his Malice. No Admiration of his mighty Acts can fill our Hearts with that Devotion and Love towards him, as the Knowledge that he undervalues them all himself, and takes no Delight in them, in comparison of the Pleasure he finds in honest and pious Men, who fear to offend him, and who repose all their Trust and Confidence in him. How ought we to be ravished with Content, to find that that which we should affect for our own Sakes, should chuse for our own Ease, and Quiet, and Repose, which is, to be afraid of him who can only do us harm, and can hinder and restrain all other Men from hurting us, how maliciously soever they are inclined to do it, and to put our Hope in him, who for that Hope-sake can and will give us all we hope for, that this which is so wholesome for us, and must be attended with so many Benefits and Advantages to us, should give him Satisfaction and Pleasure too! This is such a transcendent Goodness, that may contract our Thoughts in the praising
and

and magnifying this his Bounty and Mercy, without enlarging upon any other Branch of it; for all the Fortification and Strength by which he secures the Peace and the Plenty which we do or can enjoy, is but an Effect of that Bounty and Mercy, and of the Pleasure he takes in that Fear and Hope of ours. Neither his Snow nor his Ice is so wonderful, as that he should warm us in all that Cold, in the sharpest Persecution, in the coldest Season, in the greatest Afflictions in the longest Night of Adversity; that he should scatter and blow away all the Effects of such a terrible Frost, make that Snow like Wool, make Calamities keep us warm; that when he melts that Snow, frees us from those temporary Afflictions, we appear the more healthy, the better, and the fitter for his Blessings, which he doth frequently confer upon those who are made subject by Him to such severe Mortifications.

There is yet another part of his Bounty, his pure natural Bounty, unpurchased by any Pretence or Good-will of ours, which may exalt us more than all the rest that he hath ever done for us, which is, the Distinction that he hath made between us who are Christians and all the other Nations of the World, by communicating his Judgments, and making known to us what he hath done for us, which he hath concealed from all the World besides. They are still left in their Native Ignorance, under the same Blindness that covered their Fathers for so many Generations, to find out by the Light of their Reason the dark Method of their Creation, and the Author of their Being; and which they can hardly know to be worth their Enquiry, by not knowing that he takes farther Care of them, or expects any Retribution or Acknowledgment for them. What would any Man be the better for having an unquestionable Title to a fair Inheritance, without having any Evidence or Testimony that may make that Title to appear? What should a Man be the richer for having a vast Estate in the Hands of a Man who is never so well able to pay it, if he could make no Proof of the Trust, or any Promise made for the Repayment? That is their miserable Case; they know nothing of their Right, nothing of their Title. Whereas we, by the inestimable Benefit of his Scriptures, do not only know our Creator and Redeemer, and all that they have done for us, but likewise what our Duty is towards them, and what they can require from us; we know the Conditions and mutual Promises between us, and can urge and prove those Promises, and demand the Performance of them, if we have on our Parts performed the Conditions, or but honestly endeavoured to perform them, which were annexed to those Promises. And now, if we shall wander farther from this trodden, beaten Way, than those miserable uninstructed People, who, notwithstanding the dismal Darkness they are in, have approached as much nearer to it, as we have gone from it; we must expect that God will keep up the Distinction still, in the Distribution of his Favours, and draw them nearer to him, and into the right Way, and suffer us to wander farther out of it, and to possess that Darkness that we so wretchedly affect.

GOOD God, inspire us with as perfect an Understanding of all thy wonderful Acts of Majesty and Power, as thou thinkest necessary for us to have; and make us reverently adore what we do not perfectly understand. Let us so fear thee, that thou may'st love us; and so put our entire Hope in thee, that thou may'st relieve us. Teach us to weigh and esteem the Benefit of thy having communicated thy Scriptures to us, which thou hast restrained from other Nations, as an indispensable Obligation upon us to please thee, and

to observe all those Injunctions thou hast laid upon us, and as punctually to forbear doing any thing which thou hast expressly forbidden us to commit. Amen.

PSALM CXLVIII.

WE may be sure that all those Creatures can praise the Lord, by whom the Lord expects to be praised; for he expects nothing from any Body, but what is in their Power to give him: According to the several Abilities and Qualifications with which they are endowed, they are to praise and magnify his Name; and whatsoever performs the End of its Creation, doth praise and glorify him as he expects, and as the other ought to do. The Angels who are always about his Person, and receive and perform his Commands at once, and whose whole Business it is to praise him, cannot but do their Duty to the full; they can no more desist from praising him, than they can cease to be; and they are so expert in it, that we may piously believe that we do it the better by their Influence and Administration. The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars praise him, as they ought to do, when they perform their several Functions for which they were created, and when they raise our Hearts and Devotions to praise and magnify him. Whatsoever begets or produces Praise, may be said to give it; and if no other Argument stirred us up, the wonderful Fabrick of Heaven, the greater and lesser Lights thereof, would abundantly dispose us to admire and adore the Glory of the Creator, who hath proportioned his whole Work so much to our Use and Convenience, that as we can complain of no Defect, so the Abundance doth not cloy or perplex us. The Inhabitants of the Sea and the Inhabitants of the Air, the Fishes which dwell below, and the Birds which fly over our Heads, the fair and foul Seasons of the Year, and one succeeding the other, for the Rain and the Snow are as necessary for us as the most pleasant Sunshine, do all contribute to the Service and Praise of God, in giving us several Occasions and several Invitations to praise him. How are our Eyes delighted with looking upon imaginary Landscips, where the Skill and Art of the Painter represents to our View Birds and Beasts, and Woods and Trees where they seem feeding and sheltered; but how much more are we ravished, when from proper and convenient Situations, we have the lively Prospect of unequal Mountains and Vallies, and of the Ver- dure and Fruitfulness of both, of the Beasts feeding upon both, and the Trees shadowing both, the Grass green and fresh below, when the Snow and Cold of the Winter covers all above, which takes its Season, and yields plentiful Food to the Cattle, when the Vallies have lost all their Sweetness; who can behold this Variety, without breathing out as many kinds of Praises to the Power and the Wisdom and the Bounty of Him who formed and fashioned this pleasant and delightful Prospect? How doth Thunder itself magnify the Power of God, when it seems to shake the very Foundations of Heaven and Earth, and when its terrible Noise ceases, without having done Harm to any thing? And how doth it praise him, and give others Occasion and Obligation to praise him, when by his Direction it overthrows a House, blows down and roots up a great Tree, kills a Man or a Beast, which it often does, that it doth not at the same Time too demolish whole Cities, root up whole Forrests, and destroy both Man and Beast from the Earth; which it could as easily do, if he would permit it?

If then the irrational and inanimate Parts of God's Creation do thus labour and endeavour to procure Praise and Honour for Him, what a Harvest of Thanks and Gratitude ought He to receive from his only beloved Part of his whole Work, Man; who, without seeking Argument from the rest, hath in and from himself such abundant and infinite Matter and Obligation to love and extol the dear Cause of his Being, and the Original of all he is or can be delighted with? Kings and Princes can never magnify him enough for the Distinction he hath made between them and other Men, to whom he might have subjected them; and can never praise him to his Expectation, but in loving and cherishing their People and in obliging them to serve him; nor can the People so well praise God, as in respecting and obeying their Princes by whom they are protected and preserved from the Rapine and Violence of each other. They who are young can never sufficiently acknowledge God's Bounty towards them, if they had nothing to thank him for but the Vigour of their Strength, the excellent Constitution of their Health, and the Examples and Instruction of those who are elder than they; and they can never praise him more acceptably, than by cherishing that Strength and Health with Temperance and Sobriety, and by following those good Examples and Counsels with Modesty and Reverence; and they who are aged can never enough thank him for the long Time he hath given them to perform the short Work he expected from them, to revolve and correct the Faults of their Youth, and to make their Age venerable by their Piety, and for the Comfort he hath given them, in letting them see and be acquainted with their Heirs who must succeed them; and they cannot praise God more effectually, than in making their Age illustrious by their Virtue, and forming those who must succeed them, by the true Knowledge of God, to tread in their Steps to please him.

O Lord God, since thou dost require a proportion of Praise and Duty from all thy Creatures, as well irrational as rational; and since all other Creatures, of what kind soever, do render thee that Praise and Glory which thou dost expect from them; let not Man, we beseech thee, be the only ungrateful Creature thou hast made, who is the only Creature upon Earth whom thou hast endued with Parts and Ability to publish and set forth thy Praise and Glory. Make us when we are Young to learn and love thy Precepts, and when we are Old more diligently to practise them; and suffer not our Youth or our Age to delight in any thing that may banish us from thy Presence. Amen.

PSALM CXLIX.

IT is not easie to believe that there is any Nation so utterly destitute of all the Notions of a Deity, that they are without any Reverence for some Divinity which they cannot comprehend. The Light of Nature hath guided many excellent Persons to discern and praise and magnify a Power that they are sure is above them, and to undervalue all those Gaieties of this World which take up the Thoughts of most Men, as if they knew that there was some Pleasure after Death, which was much greater then they could enjoy during their Lives upon Earth: *Exiguum nobis vitæ curriculum natura circumscripsit, immensum gloria*, says the great Orator; and by that Glory he conceived a Condition, wherein the Fame of a virtuous Man was preserved by

by some Reward that was grateful to, and enjoy'd by the Person who merited it, and that it was not only being well spoken of by Posterity, of which he had no Sense or Knowledge. But whatever internal Acknowledgment or Confession, or external Celebration they can make of divine Providence, who are led to it by the brightest Flame of natural Reason, they can neither praise that Providence for the Blessings which they enjoy in this World, because they neither know what are Blessings, nor why themselves are sent into this World; much less in any degree conceive the Praise they owe unto it for any thing which is to be received in another. They are only his own chosen People, they to whom he hath vouchsafed the Light of the Gospel, who can sing this new Song, which neither Nature nor the Law could teach them, to celebrate his Praise in the Congregation of his Saints, in the Company of those who know that the greatest Joy and Comfort they can enjoy in this World, is the Assurance they have of their Portion in the next, if they make good their Title by their Humility and Meekness in this; and the Evidence they have of that, is the Motive and Ground of all their Joy. It is that Glory and that Ease, that is the Reward and the End of all their Labours, when all the Industry and Pains they are to take is no more Labour than if they performed it upon their Beds; when though their constant Work is to serve God, and to sing Praises to him, they are at the same Time joined with him in Commission to judge those who would not praise or acknowledge him before they came thither; they have their Hand upon that Sword with him that must execute Vengeance upon those, who whilst they lived in this World would neither be persuaded by his infinite Favours, nor reduced by all his Menaces, nor the Judgments he sent upon them, to his Service and Obedience. How little Account soever they were of here, and subjected to the Oppression of Kings and Princes, and though they were made a Prey to their Nobles and inferior Servants, there they shall be invested with Authority in that supreme Judicatory, which shall bind those Kings who would not keep themselves within any Bounds, and those Great Men who were the Ministers of their Tyranny, to undergo those heavy Calamities and Penalties as shall wipe out the Memory of all the Pleasure they took in their former Excesses and Transgression, and make the Memory thereof a most grievous Aggravation of all the Miseries they see no End of enduring. But we must remember, none ever were, or ever can be, admitted to the Exercise of this unlimited Jurisdiction over Kings and Princes, but they who have beautified their Lives in this World with all the Acts of Piety and Humility which entitles Men to Salvation: They who have drawn their Swords against their Kings and Princes, refused to yield Obedience to their Laws and Government, and endeavoured to compel them by Force to consent to the Change and Alteration of those Laws, and to bind them by the uneasy Chains of their own Promises, to the lessening or parting with their just and necessary Power, shall never be admitted to touch that Sword that must execute Judgment upon those Kings, how wicked soever they have been; but on the contrary, they shall themselves undergo the highest Degree of Torments, when, it may be, the Kings they have affronted and rebelled against, how unjust soever, may undergo a less Degree of Punishment, for the Mortification they have undergone by the Hands of their rebellious Subjects, and yet that lessening may still leave it intolerable.

O Lord of Heaven and Earth, give us Grace so to magnify thee in our Words, and to glorify thee in our Actions; so to behave ourselves throughout our Course in this World, in the Manifestation of our Piety

ty and Humility, that we may with Confidence appear before thee in the other World, worthy of that high Honour which thou hast designed and prepared for those who by the Integrity and Sincerity of their Lives have made themselves fit to sit with thee, to judge the impious Lives of those who have forfeited all the Title they had to thy Mercy. Amen.

PSALM CL.

GOD is in all Places, and wherever he is we cannot praise him enough: yet, as earthly Kings appear with more or less Honour, according to the several Stations, and several Occasions in which they appear, and in all deserve great Respect and Reverence, for they are Kings every where; in their Mirth and in their Pleasures, in their Journies and in their more private Walks the Eyes of Men attend upon them with Affection and Duty; but they appear with more Glory upon their Thrones, when they are adorn'd with all the Robes and Ornaments of Majesty, and attended by their Guards and great Officers of State, and they are then beheld with more Awe and Acclamation; so God himself is present with us in all Places, and we feel his Influence in all those Actions whereof we are not ashamed; and in those of which we are or should be, we have likewise an Evidence of his being very near us, by the Repugnance we feel within our selves in those very Actions; and if we always think upon him, and praise him, all our Actions will be the more unreprouable. But God is more present here upon Earth, and is more pleased to be approached and praised in some Places than in others; and we think upon him more, and pay him more Duty and Acknowledgements in some than in other Places; and he expects more Devotion and Piety from us, and considers more what we say to him, or think of him in Churches and Places dedicated to his Service, than what we say or do in Fairs and Markets; and yet he observes what we do amiss there too: Yet if we would behold him in his highest Majesty, and in his greatest Glory, we must look upon him in the Firmament of his Power, as he sits upon his Throne in the highest Heaven, the Palace that he reserves for himself and for his perpetual Habitation, when all the Business of this World is done; and we ought to praise and magnify him more in that Station, than in all the other Acts of his Power, because he hath reserved several Stations for us in that heavenly Mansion, if we do not walk out of that Path which he hath shewed to us to reach and guide us thither. So that when we celebrate his Greatness here, and do admire his Power, we feel at the same time a Joy within our Hearts, in the Reflection upon the Parts we ourselves shall act with and under him there. And surely they who are not raised to a wonderful degree of Admiration, and to praise and magnify him by that Contemplation, are not worthy to obtain any Place there. They who are conversant in the Science of Musick, will undertake to know that there are certain kinds of Instruments more proper and more acceptable in the Celebration of this Service, and in the praising and magnifying the Power, Majesty and Mercy of God, than others are; which, by the Force and Strength of their Melody, do even raise and carry up their Souls to the View and Prospect of Heaven itself; and that those Instruments are very necessary to our Devotions, and to the Performance of our Obligations. But God forbid, how instrumental soever such Instruments may be to the Faculties and Spirits of some Men in exalting their Devotions, that unmusical Men,

Men, who rather find Obstruction than Assistance from that Noise and Clamour, should not have equal Fervor in confessing and praising the Lord of Heaven and Earth with the others! Decency and Circumspection in our Words, that we offend not with our Tongues; Charity in our Actions towards our Neighbours, and interpreting all they do and say with Candour, and good Nature, and Humility; and Integrity in our Lives; is the best Musick in the Ears of God, and will be heard farther than the loudest Instruments, and are the most lively Representations of our Praises for his mighty Acts, and for his excellent Greatness, which we are all bound to confess and magnify by all the Organs of our Soul. And since we all shall unavoidably do this one way or other, either by a pious and chearful Retribution of our Praise and Thanksgiving for all his Goodness in our Lives and Conversation, or by undergoing those Penalties and Calamities which are the Portions of those who will not perform the other, either being equally glorious, though not equally acceptable to him; let us providently chuse to do it that Way which is most pleasant to him as well as to us, rather than the other that is grievous to him, and much more grievous to ourselves.

O Lord God, since we can never find Ways enough to magnify thy Name, or to praise thee for the great Variety of Blessings which thou hast conferred upon us in the several Seasons of our Life, as well when we have not thought of thee, as when we have prayed unto thee; inspire into our Hearts, we beseech thee, such Ways for our Acknowledgment of those great Mercies, which may be most acceptable to thee, and most agreeable to those Ends for which thou hast so bountifully poured down thy Favours upon our Heads. Let us with Joy and Comfort, remember that thou dost expect nothing else from us for all that thou hast done, but that we acknowledge, pray, and magnify thee for the same; and suffer us never to be guilty of that odious Ingratitude, as not to perform this little that thou requirest; but give us Grace, by always thinking upon it, to find out such an effectual Way of expressing it, as may please thee, and absolve us from our Obligation. Amen.

ALmighty God, and most merciful Father, to whose gracious Influence we owe every good Thought of our Hearts, and every Action that we perform with any kind of Integrity; thou knowest well, that many Years since, when I was under a general and publick Calamity, and banished from my Country, I took great Delight, and found great Comfort in reading and considering the Divine *Psalms* and Meditations of that Man after thine own Heart, thy Prophet *David*; insomuch as I began to exercise myself in devout Contemplations upon the several Subjects of that King's Devotion, and found enough of Comfort in them to raise my Spirits to a Confidence, that as thou hadst raised him from many unworthy and unjust Persecutions and Pressures, so thou wouldst preserve the King, my poor Country, and myself, from that wicked Conspiracy which was then against us all; and I continued those comfortable Considerations and Reflections with a blessed Serenity of Mind for many Years, whilst that Affliction was heavy upon me. Thou wert pleased, after many Years of grievous Calamity, to hear the Cries and Prayers of a miserable oppressed Nation, and to free them from the Tyranny they groaned under, by restoring them to their true and natural Sovereign; in whose Restoration thou didst assign me a full Measure of Happiness, which I enjoyed many Years in a Proportion

above other Men. In this Time of Peace and Plenty, I did not remember thee as I ought to have done, nor the Vows and Promises I made to thee in the Time of my Adversity ; I suffered myself to be carried away with the Ambition and Vanity of the World, tired and wearied my Spirits and Faculties in the Agitation of those Busineses which were incumbent upon me by the Place and Office which I held, without reserving so much Time to myself, as had been necessary to revolve what thou hadst done for me, and why thou hast done so much. I discontinued those good Meditations and Reflections, in which I had found so much Refreshment, and deferred proceeding therein, till I might have more Leisure, and be more vacant to those Thoughts, which ought to have been preferred before all other. Out of this Lethargy thou hast been pleased to awaken me, by a new, severe, and unexpected Affliction ; by withdrawing the King's Favour from me, whom thou knowest I have served with all Industry and Fidelity ; and suffering the Kingdom to entertain Jealousies of me, which I have always loved with more Passion than my Life : and by these unjust and unreasonable Jealousies, I am again become a banished Person, from my Country, my Children and Relations, when I am grey-headed and drawing to my Grave. But in this disconsolate Condition, thou hast in some degree renewed the State of my Health, and made me less infirm than I have been. Thou hast given me Grace to renew some Vows, which I hope thou wilt give me Opportunity to perform ; and thou hast given me Inclination and Leisure again to betake myself to my old Reflections upon the *Psalms*, and to gather out of them the same Hopes and Confidence which I had done formerly ; and to finish those Contemplations which I had so long since begun, and for which I do give thee most humble Thanks ; and do humbly beseech thy divine Majesty, that I may never, in Thought, Word or Deed commit any Crime that may make these Meditations to rise up in Judgment against me. Make me still to take Delight in that sacred Part of Scripture, indited by thy Holy Spirit, and to reap Comfort out of it ; and if it be thy blessed Will, who knowest my Heart, make me an Instrument to do thee some Service in my Native Country, and restore me to the Grace of the King, and vindicate me from those unjust Aspersions, which thou knowest I unjustly suffer under. *Amen.*

MONTPELIER,
Feb. 27. 1670.

F I N I S.



